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Le but de cette publication est de clarifier le concept de projet éducatif, en théorie et en pratique, dans le cadre d'une discussion et d'un débat à poursuivre dans le Québec anglophone. Les auteurs essaient, dans un premier temps, de définir et de clarifier le concept de projet éducatif afin de se donner un cadre d'étude et de recherche. Bien qu'explicite dans son intention d'enraciner l'école dans son milieu, le projet éducatif peut être interprété de diverses façons et son application demeure ambigüe. Cette introduction fournit un cadre qui facilite la compréhension des cinq études de cas qui suivent. Ces études tentent de refléter la diversité de l'excellence éducative dans le Québec anglophone, dans l'espoir que d'autres écoles s'inspirent de ces initiatives dans leur propre milieu. Le dernier chapitre soulève trois questions que les études de cas ont révélées.

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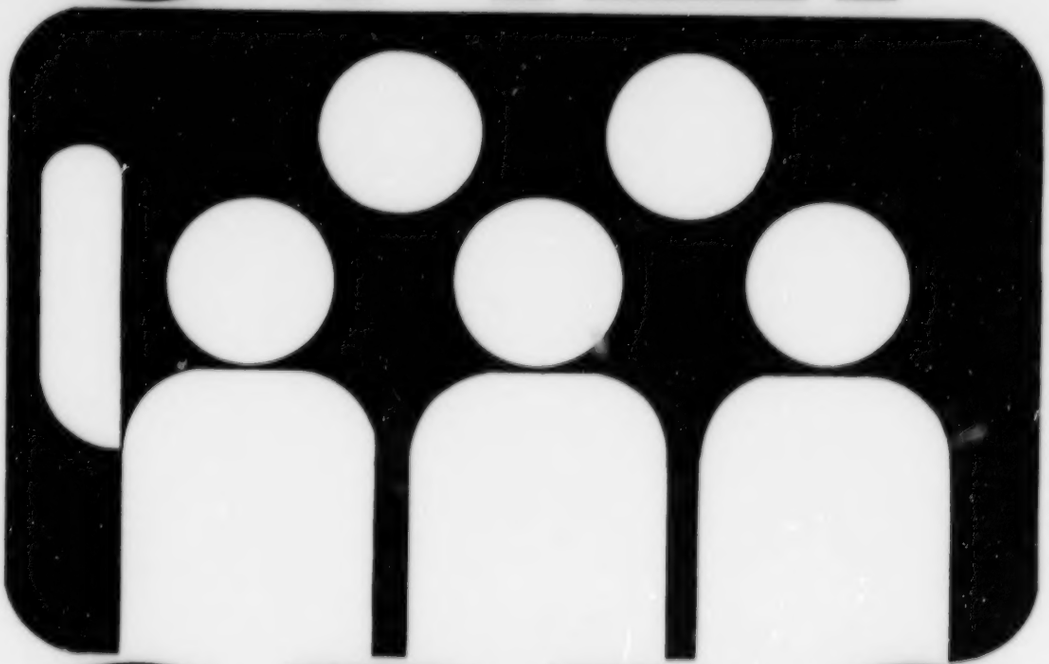

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ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION

THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT: FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contributors i

Preface ii

CHAPTER I

THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT: FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE 1
Gary J. Anderson and Janyne M. Rahming

The Educational Project - Where Does it Come From? 2
From Plan to Project - A Question Definition 4
How Shall it Be Recognized? 8
What Assumptions are Implied? 16
What are the Constraints? 17
What Promise Does it Offer? 18

CHAPTER II

COURTLAND PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, RICHELIEU VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD 21
Lynn Butler-Kisber

Introduction 22
The School 22
History of the Project 23

The Emergent Phase 24
The Development Phase 25
The Maintenance/Adaption Phase 26

The Activity-room Re-shaped 26
The Orientation Committee 34
Other Developments 35

The Visible Identity and Commitment 36

CHAPTER III

SIR WILFRID LAURIER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, COMMISSION DES ECOLES CATHOLIQUES DE MONTREAL 40
Mary H. Maguire

A Junior High School in Search of Core: 41
Episode 1 41
Episode 2 43

A Junior High School: An Educational Project 45
When, Where, Why An Educational Project? An Interview 49
Reflective Reactions: Within an Educational Project 54

CHAPTER IV

KEITH SCHOOL, PROTESTANT SCHOOL BOARD OF GREATER MONTREAL . . . 67
Judith Slaughter

Vignette 67
Description of the Educational Project 68
Meeting the Criteria of an Educational Project 78
Educating Children with Difficulties 82

CHAPTER V

WILDER PENFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BALDWIN-CARTIER SCHOOL BOARD . 85
Martha E. Nixon

The School 86
The Second Language Program 88
Extra-Curricular Activities 93
Systematic Training for Effective Parenting Program 97
Conclusion 98

CHAPTER VI

FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN LENNOXVILLE - LENNOXVILLE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD 101
John Wolforth and Howard Barber

Preamble: An Evening with Parents 102
The Program in a Nutshell 104
Geographical and Educational Context 104
Parents' Views 106
Teachers' Views 107
Sixty-Minutes Per Day of French as a Second Language 108
Implementation of the Program 109
An Educational Project 113
Conclusion 117

CHAPTER VII

THE ART OF "PROJECT-ING" - ILLUSTRATIONS, IDENTITIES, AND ILLUSIONS 121
Norman Henchey

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PREFACE

Most policy reforms in education create mixed reactions - anticipation, hope, apprehension, and concern. The policy change represented by the Educational Project is no exception. Reactions become even more intense given the complexity of the concept and its elusiveness, particularly for English-speaking educators who may not have been involved in the extensive discussions of the French community on this topic. The purpose of this publication is to clarify the Educational Project, in theory and in practice, and in so doing to set the stage for continuing discussion and debate within English Quebec.

The book reflects the work both of scholars and of practitioners. Our role has been to observe, to report, and to analyze. We recognize that our work has been preceeded by years of experimentation in the field. Educators throughout Quebec have always searched for ways of improving; it is in part, these efforts which have inspired the development of the Educational Project concept. We consider the overall purpose of the policy to be the generalization of the educational excellence of selected schools to all schools, a goal that most educators would share. The case studies we have reported generally preceeded the official policy on the Educational Project, but they are indicative of the types of initiatives on which the policy was based. Our analyses, therefore, shed light on both the individual cases and the overall policy. We expect that the schools

we have studied and others attempting similar work will benefit from the theoretical interpretations given to the Educational Project in much the same way as the policy itself can be developed and transformed to meet the realities of school life depicted in our case studies.

Selection of the case studies for the book was a major challenge, for there are many schools within the English-language educational system which have grappled with these issues of innovation, increased parent participation and redefinition of educational philosophy. Our task was not simplified by our procedure of requesting case study suggestions from various educational groups. We solicited recommendations from each school board, from the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers and the Provincial Association of Catholic Teachers, from the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards, from the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, and from teacher educators. Nearly forty different suggestions were received.

In a number of cases, the schools suggested were widely known throughout the province for specific innovative programs. In all cases, the suggestions we received offered a convincing rationale for inclusion. Given this long list of schools for potential in-depth study, we were forced to make arbitrary decisions. We have attempted to select typical rather than alternative types of schools and have attempted to include a diversity of types, levels and community

contexts.

The study itself was commissoned by the Ministere de l'Education du Quebec through its Equipe Permanente du Project Educatif. The researchers met for a day with three members of the Equipe, Regent Fortin, Yvan Chevrette, and Fran Rotman and thereby gained valuable insights into ministry thinking on the concept. Throughout the period of study, members of the research team maintained close contact with Fran Rotman. She served as a helpful guide and vital link with the Equipe. The study would not have been possible without the full cooperation of people from the various schools and school boards whose work is featured in the case studies. In every case, such people as commissioners, senior administrators, principals, teachers and students assisted the researchers by giving us access to the schools and in some cases by commenting on drafts of the text. While it is not possible to acknowledge all individual contributions, we would like to thank all those who assisted us. Lastly, we wish to acknowledge the research grant from the Ministere which made the study possible. We have enjoyed our involvement in the study and hope that you will enjoy reading it.

Gary J. Anderson
Janyne M. Rahming

Editors

CHAPTER 1

THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

Gary J. Anderson
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The history of education is inscribed with successive attempts to adapt, experiment, change and reform the schools. In this century alone, the list is long and varied, ranging from the Dewey-inspired progressive schools of the 1930's to the precision teaching classrooms of B.F. Skinner. In Quebec, the reform movements of the early 1960's precipitated dramatic changes throughout the educational system: the regrouping of schools into larger districts, the evolution of the comprehensive secondary school, the introduction of the CEGEP level, and the expansion of the university system. Control of the system has shifted from such institutions as the Church to such groups as elected commissioners, professional unions, and a centralized government bureaucracy. Curriculum, has not only expanded into new levels and content areas but is under continuing revision. Not entirely satisfied with these major reforms, the MEQ (Ministère de l'Education) has developed the concept of the Educational Project. What is the Educational Project and what is its relevance within English-speaking communities in Quebec?

This chapter is intended to review the work that has accompanied efforts to define and clarify the concept of an Educational Project in order to establish a framework for study and research. Such a framework should provide the reader with a useful introduction to the case studies which follow. It is an assumption of this chapter that the concept, though explicit in its intention to situate the school more firmly within its milieu, has been subjected to varying interpretations and remains ambiguous in its application.

Additionally, there exists a need for interpreting educational policies primarily intended for francophone schools to the context of English language school systems. While much of the language associated with the Educational Project (i.e. transparence, cohérence, proche du vécu de l'élève) can perhaps be translated, it remains uncertain whether such notions are easily assimilated within the context of educational thought as it currently exists in the English language community.

EDUCATIONAL PROJECT - WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?[1]

While it is difficult to attribute the exact origin of most educational ideas, it would appear that the concept of the Educational Project originated from the MEQ. First referred to in the Green Paper as an "educational plan" (MEQ, 1978), its presence in a document stressing strong central control and school uniformity suggests that the educational plan may have been the result of opposing forces. A possible inference is that the MEQ was attempting, in its educational plan outline, to create an equilibrium between forces of centralization

[1] For a detailed analysis of the historical context surrounding the concept as well as a review of the current status of the concept, the reader is referred to Ambroise, A. and Ouellet, R. Le Projet Educatif de l'Ecole: Une Analyse Critique. Canadian Journal of Educational, 1981, 6 (2), 39-53.

acting on such matters as curriculum and pressures for decentralization or the maintenance of school and board-based autonomy. The message of a strong centralized decision-making power runs through much of the Green Paper and it was perhaps felt that some signal should be offered that certain forms of decentralized decision-making were still to be encouraged. Within this same context of power balancing, the Educational Project has also been viewed as a means for effecting a shift of decision-making power away from school boards and down to the level of individual schools. Since much policy control exists at the level of the MEQ such a shift would have as major consequence a further reduction in the amount of educational control school boards can maintain.

An alternative view of the rationale behind the development of the concept is related to broader issues of school excellence. The Educational Project may represent an attempt to capture for the public school system those qualities which seem to be attracting a considerable number of parents to private schools. Private schools are often associated with three major features: competent educational services, rapport with parent groups, and a high degree of visibility (or <u>transparence</u>) associated with the school's underlying philosophy. If competent educational services are to be ensured by the development of centralized control over curriculum matters, could the two remaining features be developed for individual schools through the concept of an Educational Project?

While all of this analysis is speculative, there is a suggestion that, from its inception, the Educational Project or Plan as it was then called, was intended as a tool to allow schools, under increasing pressure for conformity, to expand beyond the dictates imposed by MEQ policy. The questions remain: was the Educational Plan meant as an instrument to further MEQ policy; as a palliative to allow reluctant educators to cope with the new policies; or, as a policy designed simply to increase individual school exellence?

The far from enthusiastic response given to the Educational Plan confirms the existence of serious misgivings. Many could not see in what domains the school was to be allowed to take charge of its destiny, or what limits were to be placed on school initiatives. There was also considerable public concern over the new responsibilities of professional educators now required to support and develop an Educational Plan. While the MEQ took great pains to consult widely on the concept, it is equally true that the concept presented for consultation was a product of the central power and was perhaps inevitably greeted with suspicion by school authorities feeling the increasing incursion on a range of financial and educational jurisdictional matters.

FROM PLAN TO PROJECT - A QUESTION OF DEFINITION

Following public response to the educational plan proposal of the

Green Paper, Ministry terminology changed, perhaps reflecting a shift of emphasis from the notion of a plan with its necessary operational steps, to a notion of a process, which has become crucial to current MEQ definitions of what is now called an Educational Project.

The shift is apparent through comparison of the words of the Green Paper with later formulations. The Green Paper refers to the concept in sections 5.17 and 5.18:

> In other words, these schools wished to give themselves a programme of action which would be their own and in which they were prepared to invest their energy. In order to clarify their orientations, they have tried to integrate the different requirements of their educational mission, the more specific projects of parents and educators, the most appropriate educational methods and strategies, and the contributions of all those individuals and groups who carried out their functions within the school. Consequently, they planned their programme of action according to their explicit objectives.
>
> In a great number of school boards and schools, the expression educational plan is used more and more to designate this programme of action because this expression corresponds to the concept of a school oriented towards the future. (MEQ, 1978, 5.17 - 5.18)

The stress is on having a plan or a program of action. Later formulations, however, replace the requirement for a plan by a process described as follows:

> The Educational Project is the dynamic initiative by which a school, through the concerted will of the parents, the students, the administrators and the staff, undertakes to implement a general plan of action. (MEQ, 1979, section 3.5.2)

By defining the Educational Project as a "dynamic initiative", the MEQ is stressing the notion that the school acts on its own behalf and within the total community. This quality of an Education Project is further explained.

> This local take-over is not intended to cut the school off from the whole system, but to make it more responsive to the needs of society, while the community becomes more concerned with the educational institution and the welfare of the child. (MEQ, 1979, section 3.6.3)

Such an approach to definition deals more with the conditions under which an Educational Project develops rather than specifies its characteristics. In fact, the Plan d'Action notes:

> No single model can be imposed since each community is responsible for its own salvation. (MEQ, 1979, section 3.5.2)

As the concept of the Educational Project has been applied in a variety of settings, additional definitions and attempts at clarification have evolved. The translated copy of the case study completed at L'Ecole Polyvalente Jean-Baptiste Meilleur offers the following statement:

> The Educational Project is defined as the voluntary, conscious, goal-directed and organized action of the school's various participants in the pursuit of their own development. (MEQ, 1980(a), p. 26)

While this definition is closely linked to that offered in the Plan d'Action, it represents one attempt to provide for greater precision.

A different emphasis is given in the following direction developed by Floriant Lafortune and cited by La Commission Scolaire Jérome Le Royer in their "Politiques, Règlements et Directives".

> The Educational Project is a form of management which the school adopts in order to create a coherence between the orientations and objectives of the school board, those of the school and the various activities that it must realize in order to favor the development of the child. (Jérome Le Royer, 1980, 99-1-01)

All of these reflections and definitions share a common weakness if our concern is to describe what the Educational Project is and guide school agents in the creation of such a project. They identify attributes of the Educational Project more clearly than they define its nature. We are led to a position whereby all schools might be viewed as Educational Projects in the making since most schools would subscribe to the values inherent in the concept, i.e. the need to link philosophy to practice (cohérence), the desirability of having a well-understood rationale (transparence), and the need to provide students with school experiences relevant to their lives. (proche du vécu). Such a position leaves us only with the task of measuring the degree to which any given school exhibits these characteristics but it avoids the issue of how a school appropriates the concept and transforms educational philosophy into a set of concrete operational plans.

This shift from product to process does not appear resolved and, as a result, most definitions suffer from being so broad as to create

difficulties for researchers concerned with identifying and studying Educational Projects and possibly for school and board personnel interested in developing an Educational Project. While elements stand out and the underlying philosophy is explicit (decentralization, accountability from school to community, participation, and relevance within its community) the Educational Project, as a tool or a policy to adopt, remains elusive. This ambiguity may be inevitable at this stage since the concern which prompted the development of the Educational Project was always made more explicit than the product it was meant to define.

Despite continuing controversy over the issues of definition (process-product), efforts to reduce the ambiguity and provide an analytic framework do exist. We take the position of refraining from confirming any one type of definition at this time, in the hope that the case studies reported will be suggestive of what elements a definition must include. Nevertheless we have made use of a set of criteria which apply both to the Educational Project as a product and the Educational Project as a process.

HOW SHALL IT BE RECOGNIZED?

Given the elusive nature of a definition, there have been attempts to pin down criteria which can be applied analytically to the study of any Educational Project. The MEQ publiction, "Le projet éducatif de

l'école: working document" and working documents of the Equipe Permanente sur le Projet Educatif (EPPE) illustrate these efforts. For example, the former document refers to a school which:

> defines its specific objectives, prepares and carries out a plan of action and revises the plan periodically with the participation of the students, the parents and the staff of the school and school board. (MEQ, 1980(b), p. 2)

The documents goes on to explain the meaning of several of the key terms:

1.1 A Dynamic Initiative

> A school's educational project commits that school to a process which has an objective to improve the efficiency of the school's actions and thus provide a better education for students.

1.2 A Plan of Action

> The educational project infers a plan of action. Such a plan is prepared with local needs in mind, after reflection, observation, analysis and consultation on the part of the educational agents. Objectives are pursued according to the means available to the school or to those the school can provide for itself. (MEQ, 1980(b), p. 2)

The EPPE group has also been working on the concept. In its work, EPPE has developed a series of indicators which are intended to guide the identification of Educational Project activities of a school. The task was to clarify the concept and provide key issues for discussion within schools and school systems. Could the concept be operationalized in a manner that would permit evaluation of an existing Educational Project as well as one that would provide a

framework for school-based initiation? A list of eleven such indicators is under development and these are reported here:

> reflects the desires for participation of the various agents
>
> respects diversity
>
> provides a meaningful role for the participants
>
> establishes logical and consistent links between ideology and practice
>
> is transparent to all or a school whose orientation and philosophy has been made explicit and is understood by the entire community
>
> reflects the reality of the child, which is concerned with establishing meaningful links between school life and life within the broader community context
>
> demonstrates adaptive capacity
>
> is integrated with its community
>
> is linked to other units of the educational system
>
> represents a collective project, in which concerted action leads to consensus
>
> facilitates the development of each participant
>
> (EPPE, 1981)

It is clear that these indicators provide a valuable tool for analysis or initiation of an Educational Project. They lend weight to the assumption that the Educational Project will mean many different things depending on the setting in which it occurs. These indicators also reinforce a notion of process, rather than product, as a crucial element of the Educational Project. It is clear that not all indicators may be present in a specific school; it may be that some become more relevant than others depending upon the context. It is

also clear that, while these indicators may each represent desirable features of an Educational Project, a great deal of variance is to be expected in terms of the degree to which any one school demonstrates each of the features, at any given time.

In our attempt to clarify the concept we consider it essential to make explicit both the product and process dimensions, and have done so in the discussion which follows.

Product Criteria

The types of activities and endeavors considered to be an educational project can take place at many levels within the educational system though the focus is on the school as the central unit. At the level of a whole school the educational project would normally cut across subject matter disciplines, grade levels, and other traditional divisions within the school. In our work an attempt will be made to feature this school level of analysis. However, it should be made clear that it is possible to have activities take place for a part of the school at least while a school-wide initiative is emerging areas. By the same token, activities could also be at the level of the whole school system. While we feel that the concept of the educational project is most clear when it is considered to be an activity of the whole school and its surrounding community, we have included in a later chapter an example of an Educational Project within the whole school system.

In attempting to resolve the issue of product versus process, we would suggest a minimal, but important, product dimension. We find a certain intuitive appeal to the notion of plan as the central element for an Educational Project. Thus, we propose that a necessary condition for an Educational Project is that it includes a plan designating some area for development in the educational system. This designated area for development will take time to evolve and presupposes certain process considerations as noted below. It is not sufficient for any one person to unveil a plan. Rather it must be developed by the whole school community and have required process characteristics. We add, as well, that we are using the term plan to include an action phase. It becomes cyclical, as initial process lead to a plan which also includes more process dimensions.

Process Criteria

In studying available documentation on proposed indicators we have found ourselves in the difficult position of having either to incorporate a lengthy list of criteria or alternatively, of placing a value judgement on the available criteria. The former could lead to an unrealistic set of expectations for schools; hence we have adopted the latter position. We propose five process criteria which we consider necessary and sufficient for an Educational Project. Of course, this is a theoretical position, subject to revision on the basis of our case study research.

1. Initiated from within

An important attribute of an Educational Project is that it be initiated from within and have the quality of a local undertaking described in the Plan d'Action and underlying several of the indicators proposed by the EPPE committee. The initiation of action comes from within the school, sometimes in response to changing external circumstances but, whatever the cause, the Educational Project represents a concerted effort on the part of the school to change and improve its educational service as opposed to having change imposed from without by administrative fiat or prescribed policy. The school, therefore, initiates the action and launches a course of activity which is unique to that school and that milieu. This quality of taking charge of one's destiny is crucial to the concept of an educational project.

2. Reflecting Consensus

An Educational Project should be developed within the context of school-community consultation and participation. The achievement of consensus may either be an effect of having an Educational Project or the condition precipitating its development. In either case, the important feature is that participants are engaged in the kind of work which helps clarify the role of the school in such a way that divergent opinions can somehow be reconciled and fruitfully contribute to the formation of a clear school identity. The point here is that the rationale of the school becomes explicit through this process and the school's philosophy becomes

known to the whole community as a result of a process of description, clarification, and negotiation.

3. Facilitating the Development of Participants

An Educational Project is undertaken to make the school more responsive to its milieu and as such, the project must be one which supports participants, either individually or as a group. It is assumed that an Educational Project would facilitate this development both as a result of increased dialogue between groups such as parents and teachers, and more directly in terms of the kind of services the project has set in motion.

4. Evolving Through Adaptation

The Educational Project is based on the notion of the school adapting to its community and the community, in turn, adapting to the nature of the school. There are several aspects to this notion of adaptation. First, it is assumed that the school reflects whatever diversity exists within its milieu and is capable of responding to changes in needs and resources. Second is the implicit assumption that existing or developing communication systems provide the necessary source of information for such adaptation to occur. Thirdly, it should be stressed that adaptation does not necessarily mean the adoption of avant-garde positions. The project need not be a dramatic departure from current pedagogical practices. If maintenance of current techniques is, in fact, considered desirable, such a reaffirmation

must follow adequate community consultation and involvement in clarifying the nature of the school and its values.

5. Known About and Understood

This quality is closely related to the notion of transparence. The school's Educational Project should be one which has been widely discussed within the community. Though it may vary in scope, either across grade levels, curriculum areas, or pupil service programs, the participants should be capable of defining its purpose and nature.

While these are the general criteria which have guided us in selection of case studies we hope that findings will be suggestive of the eventual definition of the Educational Project concept.

A final process matter which must be mentioned concerns the Orientation Committee as a consultation system suggested in MEQ documents. While recognizing the important role given this committee in MEQ literature, we do not consider the existence of an Orientation Committee to be a pre-requisite of an Educational Project. There are several reasons for this position: first, it would appear as though some of the resistance to the MEQ Educational Project policy is in fact resistance to the establishment of Orientation Committees whose role is seen as a source of possible conflict among different groups; secondly, schools may well have established and made use of quite different modes for carrying out an Educational Project and these

require study; thirdly, the notion of Orientation Committee has not been widely adopted in the English-speaking community. For these reasons we have kept the two concepts distinct in our work on the Educational Project. It is hoped that the case studies will themselves be suggestive of procedures apt to facilitate the development of an Educational Project.

WHAT ASSUMPTIONS ARE IMPLIED?

As noted earlier, there are conflicting views about both the desirability and the feasibility of the Educational Project. Some of the major assumptions are that:

1. Schools do in fact represent homogeneous communities, and are not as pluralistic as the larger social context. This might be true in some areas and at some levels, more than others. It has been suggested that homogeneity is less prevalent in English-language Quebec schools than in francophone schools.
2. Schools can achieve efficient balance between pressures for adaptability and needs for stability.
3. A significant participatory role can be found in spite of the need for maintenance of power at higher levels for certain kinds of decisions.
4. Intended participants are available to engage in the suggested processes.

Whether these assumptions are in fact necessary conditions for success, and the extent to which success may be achieved without them can only be verified in the light of experience in the field.

WHAT ARE THE CONSTRAINTS?

Much of what has been said so far suggest that by having an Educational Project the school can transform itself into whatever it wishes to be as long as the process criteria are met. Obviously such latitude is not permitted. Several constraints are placed on the specific nature of the Educational Project as it will evolve in a given school. Among the most major are:

1. the régime pédagogique of the province.
2. lack of financial support from the MEQ for Educational Project work at the local level.
3. lack of available personnel and financial support at the board level.
4. Conflicting responsibilities and priorities at the local school level.
5. Syndical constraints.
6. Decline in enrolments and resources.
7. Diversity within communities.

There seem to be two positions which can be adopted with regard to these constraints. The first would suggest that such constraints are inevitable aspects of any context in which action is being planned, that constraints exist in all decision-making situations and are no more than problems for which solutions can and should be found. A position such as this would no doubt sit well with MEQ concerns to prevent schools from developing expectations for support beyond that which the MEQ is willing to provide. The second position suggests

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that these constraints are in some cases of such a scope as to prevent the implementation of an Educational Project, at least in terms of certain essential features. What remains clear is that schools developing Educational Projects must in fact engage in numerous negotiations and deal with these issues at a variety of levels.

WHAT PROMISE DOES IT OFFER?

Given the ambiguities in definition and the lack of resolution of the issues of central versus local educational control, what promise does the Educational Project offer? It is our hope that the study of examples which contain at least some elements of the concept will be a realistic antidote to an overly theoretical debate of its merits.

Public concern about the quality of education has rarely been greater. There are cries for higher standards and increased effectiveness, pressure to humanize school environments and attempts to make schools more relevant to the 1980's. The major question is whether the Educational Project can help individual schools resolve conflicting priorities and thereby increase educational excellence.

Our work is offered in a spirit of exploration recognizing that the merits of the Educational Project will rest on its usefulness as a catalyst for change and improvement at the level of individual school communities.

We have not attempted to be prescriptive in our case study analysis. Rather, we have attempted to sample the diversity of educational excellence in anglophone Quebec in the hope that others will be able to extend and interpret these cases in the context of other local situations. Many schools have initiated activities along the lines prescribed by the Educational Project and our work has uncovered such illustrations. The examples included here are not the only ones, nor are they intended to be the best. Their main feature is that they are representative and diverse.

We wish to stress that most of the cases in the remainder of this report pre-dated official recognition of the concept of an Educational Project. But, we believe that they represent many of the elements that have been incorporated into the MEQ's thinking about the concept. In many instances, MEQ knew of the existence of these initiatives and its policies have been intended to amplify the number and scope of such activities. Many projects developed without knowledge of the MEQ's intentions, and most would not credit the MEQ in getting them underway. We do not feel that there should be any difficulty in reconciling these differing origins. The cases demonstrate that educational excellence has been a priority both for MEQ and for Quebec schools and signal that educational excellence will continue to be so.

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CHAPTER II

COURTLAND PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
RICHELIEU VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

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As one turns from rue Pont Briand onto Wolfe, a typical elementary school comes into view. Nothing about its external appearance distinguishes Courtland Park from many other elementary schools. The first indication that something very interesting is happening occurs as one enters the brightly coloured corridor on the ground floor. The atmosphere is like an elusive figure beckoning one to follow, to see. . . The following case study illustrates the emergence of an educational project in Courtland Park Elementary School from its original "grass-roots" inception to its present formalized state. This project embraces:

> . . . the enrichment of student life through a positive interaction with the community. (Courtland Park, 1981)

THE SCHOOL

Courtland Park Elementary School is a two-story brick structure located in the south shore municipality of St. Bruno. It is one of seven serving a board-wide population of 1312 students. The Richelieu Valley School Board is a sector board of the South Shore Protestant Regional School Commission and encompasses the territory bounded by Sorel, the St. Lawrence River, Chambly and St. Bruno. The school has been in existence since 1961. At present, it houses 250 children from Kindergarten to grade six and operates as a single-track system. The children come from a wide range of backgrounds and there is a certain fixed turnover of students as approximately one third of those

attending Courtland Park come from the St. Hubert Air Force Base. Of the ten educational staff one acts as head teacher and carries on the daily administrative functions as well as some teaching. The principal visits twice per week and a three quarter time physical education specialist teaches all the grades during his Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in the school. A full-time secretary is the only non-teaching personnel other than the nurse who visits the first three Mondays of each month. Additional facilities run by the school (e.g. the library) function under the direction of a large core of parent volunteers who are in the school on a regular basis each week.

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

The Courtland Park Educational Project has developed very naturally over the past nine years as the identity of the school evolved to meet the needs of the various school agents.

An Educational Project inherently demands that a school has a certain identity. The identity of Courtland Park School, reflected in the comments of interviewees, is that it presently has, a community orientation, planned active learning involvement, and an open, warm, friendly atmosphere.

It was through grass-roots initiatives, enthusiasm and hard work that the natural evolution in the school was shaped and gradually became

formalized as an educational project.

The Emergent Phase

The roots of the educational project at Courtland Park can be traced in part to an active School Committee which has functioned effectively since 1972. The ground was fertile for parent involvement since the community had a high interest in education and the teaching staff was traditionally open, enthusiastic and hardworking. These conditions precipitated community participation and. . . made the very first steps of the project an easy beginning.

In 1974, three teachers, encouraged by government regulations, the school board and principals were actively involved in obtaining their Special Education Diplomas. As a result of the clinical parts of the program, they became interested in participatory learning and the development of a resource room. The three teachers formed a committee to plan such a room to be housed in Courtland Park School. They petitioned the Board to remove the wall between two rooms to supply the necessary space.

The Board did not act immediately. It took three additional years of more detailed planning and negotiations to achieve the desired results. During this waiting period, the Special Education teacher at Courtland Park, June Rosevear, was already using her special education room as a free-flow room in the afternoons to which children came for remedial help. The free-flow room was actively-oriented so in 1977

when the board at last agreed to eliminate the designated wall, it was removed between her classroom and the next. Her free-flow area expanded into the extra space and the "activity room" was born.

Afraid of the term "resource room" which in many settings is often reduced to a storage cupboard, she chose the name activity room, and then collected and organized pertinent, interesting teaching material and solicited community volunteers to help with the implementation. It was at this point that the project began to form. Community interest and teacher enthusiasm had taken focus. A portion of the curriculum was beginning to involve parents, teachers and students in a common effort.

The Development Phase

By 1977, June Rosevear had taken on the organizational responsibility for the activity room and was delegating work to teachers for planning some of the activity centres. The parent volunteers were actively participating in helping children at the centres and were beginning to collect resources that were easily accessible and pertinent to the areas of study. Board members who visited the room were impressed and gave the necessary support. The board requested that some videotaping be done while the room was in session, underlying its tacit approval.

> Any such action of the school necessarily involves all of those who are directly concerned: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching personnel and the school administration. With the help and co-operation of the school board, they assume joint responsibility for the educational project. Together they reach a number of

> decisions that determine the direction the school will take so that its development is no longer a matter of chance but the result of real choice. (MEQ, 1980, 1.3, p. 2)

Courtland Park School had reached this stage in the development of its project.

The Maintenance/Adaption Phase

The Activity Room Re-shaped

The beginning of the maintenance phase was a gradual re-shaping of the activity room:

> The evaluation can be done at various times. . . evaluation is built into the various activities so that it is an ongoing process. Whatever the method, evaluation is essential to the development and adaptation of the project. (MEQ, 1980, 7.2.3, p. 30)

What had begun as a series of loosely connected activity centres for all children and staffed rather informally by volunteers, evolved into a thematic approach to the curriculum. The teachers were then able to initiate or expand appropriate learning for the particular grade level in their classrooms. Then, either prior to, or after the classroom learning, the children were actively engaged in tasks which developed concepts and skills related to the theme within the umbrella areas of science, cooking and the arts in the activity room.

Under the direction of June Rosevear, the teachers would agree on a theme that was meaningful for all children from kindergarten through grade 6. Then, during an approximate three-week planning and

preparation period, activities were prepared. Community resources were tapped and volunteers had an instructional session where they were shown how to operate the centres and guide the children in their tasks. In addition, the volunteers were encouraged to share experiences and expertise pertinent to activities at the centres.

At the present time, themes have been systematized into three per year for a period of seven weeks per theme. This amount of time evolved as realistic, given the time required for planning and preparation.

One and one half days per week are set aside for the activity room. Each class visits the room once per week for a forty-minute period. There are always seven centres so that each class has the opportunity to work at every centre. All centres offer activities that engage the children in something visual and something auditory. The work they do results in a product.

For each theme a "surprise centre" is created. The centre is enclosed and its contents unknown until the particular group is scheduled for it. There has been an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response to the surprise centre from all grade levels.

In order that the materials and tasks meet the various ability levels across the grades, they are prepared with appropriate cut-off points or parallel activities. This allows all children to participate at every centre and involves the entire school in a common curricular

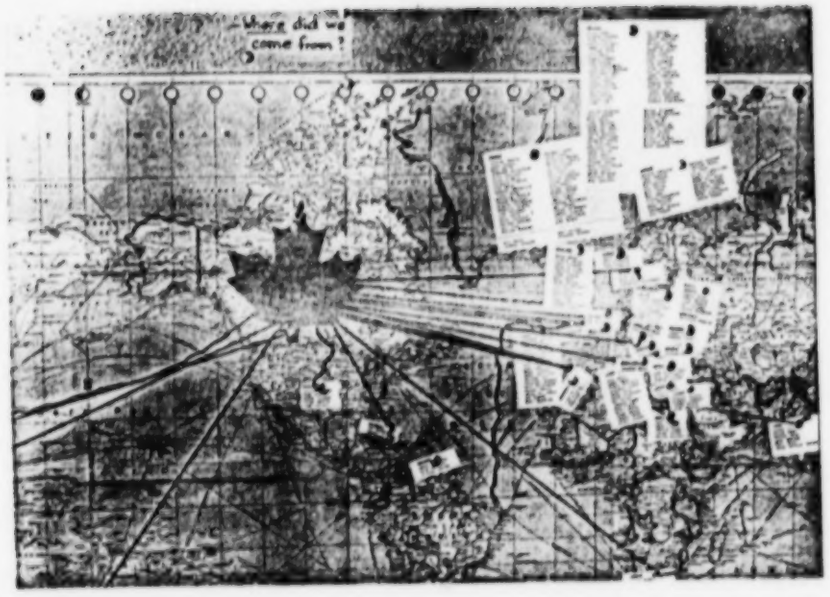
area of study.

The volunteers and teachers who operate the centres rotate through the centres during the seven week period to avoid the monotony of repeating information to the many groups.

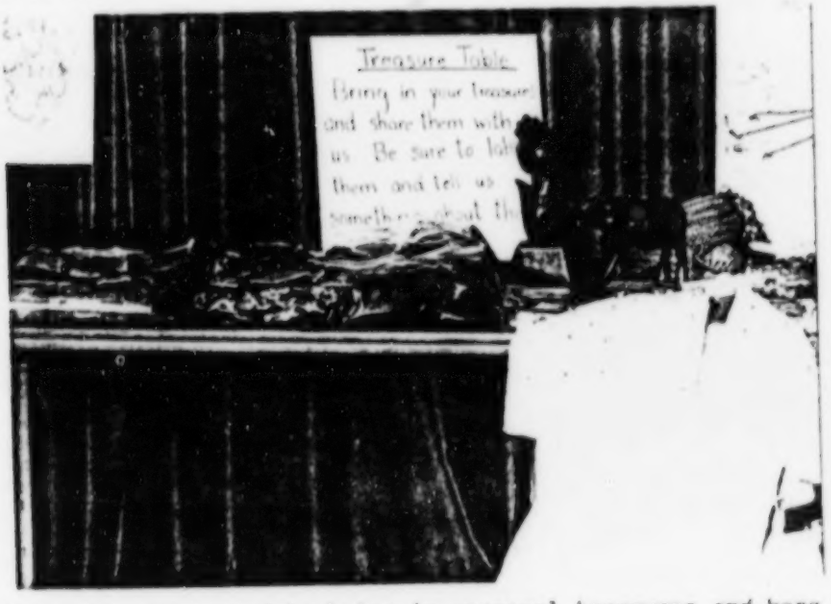
As in the classrooms, the library becomes a spin-off point for the current theme. It is not unusual to see books displayed featuring topics related to those at the centres. The volunteers who run the library find themselves peripherally involved answering questions and book requests which are generated from the theme.

During the current year the themes have been "know yourself", "know your neighbour", "know your community". These were chosen because they had the potential of interesting all the children and because they would help the students learn more about each other's background as well as familiarize them with their immediate environment, St. Bruno.

The following photographs illustrate the theme "Know Your Neighbour." The seven centres for this period were cooking, science, art, France, India, China and Africa. These pictures give a visual cross-section of some of the children at work; the captions describe the activities.



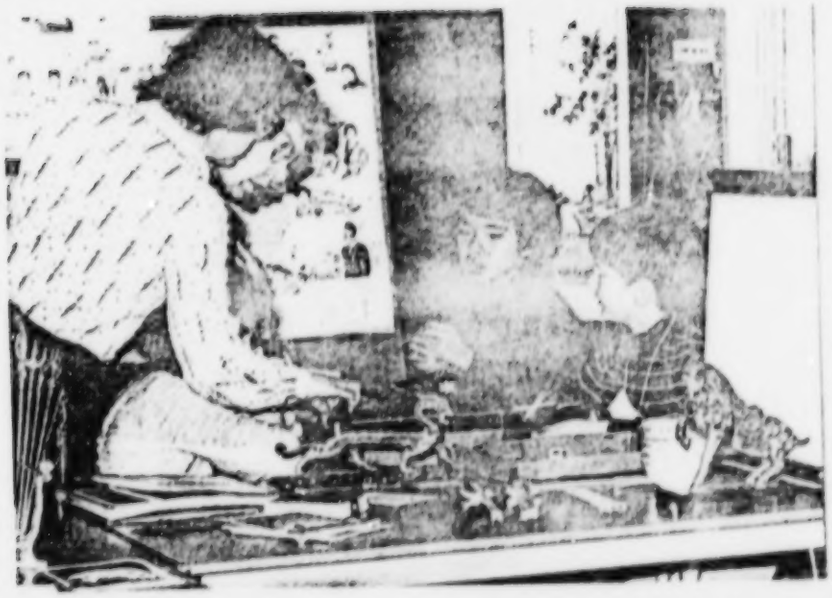
This visual display depicts the beginning stage of the theme. Each child chose two places of family origin and located it on the map for others to see.



Children were encouraged to bring in personal treasures and here these are shared.

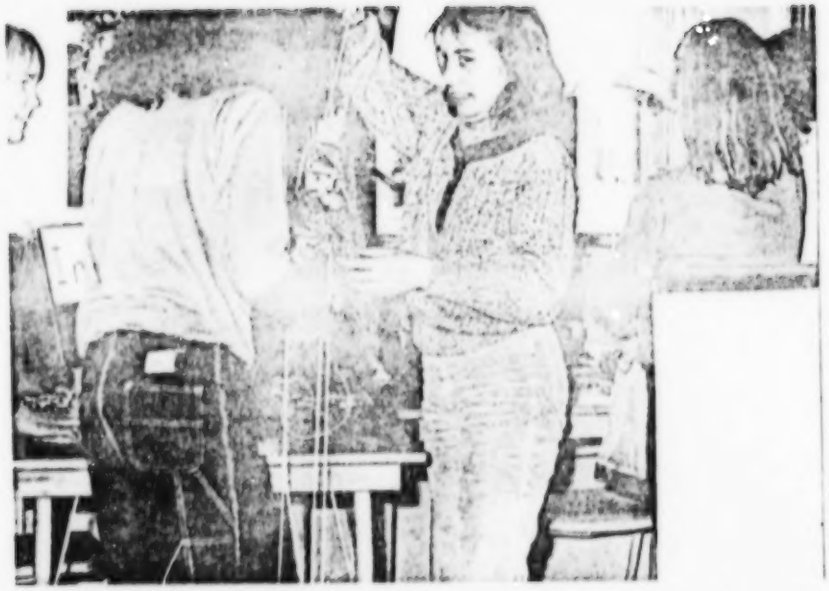
At the cooking centre the children taste spices and discover their origins. Cooking results in the production of Indian farfar, puris and chapattis.

Following a tape produced by a parent whose childhood was spent in France, the children discover some pedagogical and cultural differences. They taste French bread, a customary part of "petit dejeuner."



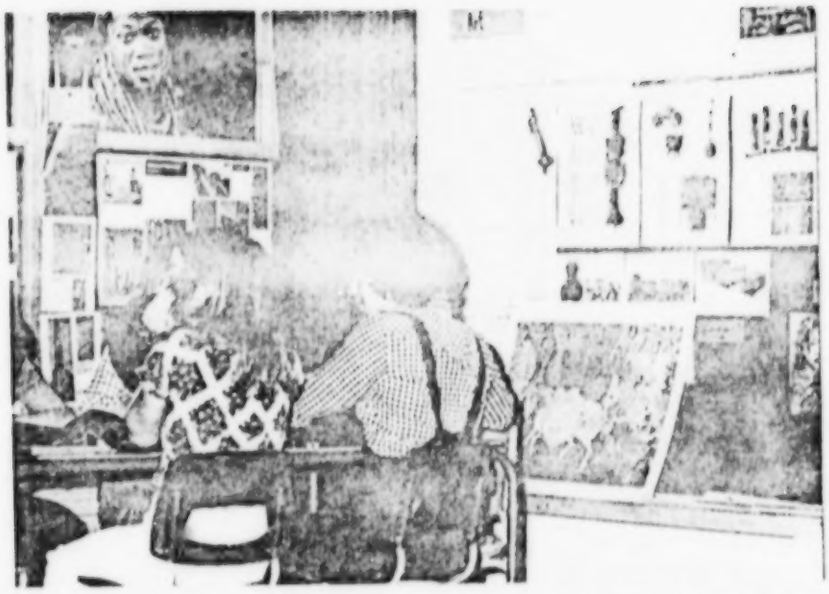
Artifacts from China and the eighteen instruments of war provide motivation for discussion. The children listen to a tape focusing on Chinese calligraphy and then try their hands at writing.

An important discussion topic at the Science centre is world power sources. Observation and experimentation involve electricity, steam and solar energy.

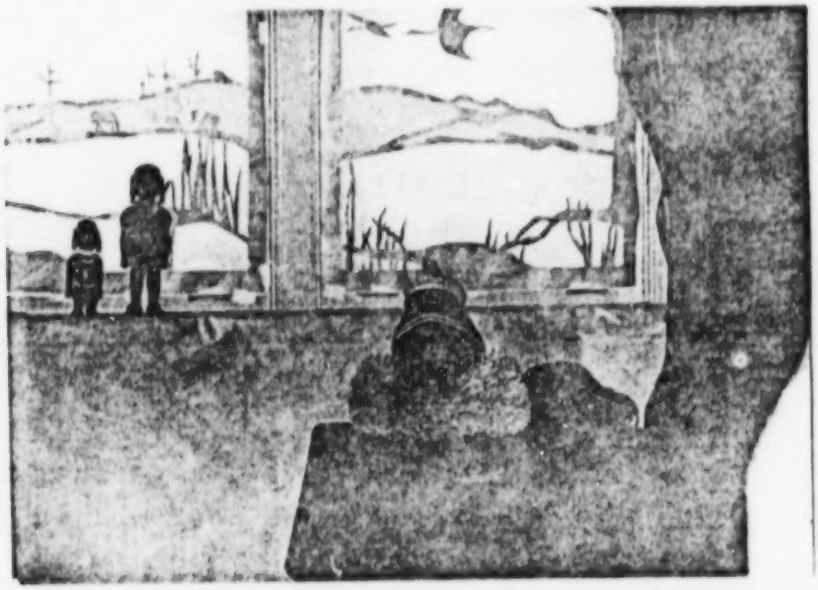


A tape at the Indian centre describes a parent volunteer's experiences growing up in India; slides depict differences between northern and southern India. The puppets are a novelty, a natural extension to the slides of the puppet market.

Mask-making is a recurring theme in many cultures. The children learn about the Egyptian death mask, the Chinese drama mask. African masks and the Canadian hockey mask.



Theoretical background for the art centre is provided via tapes and discussion of tomb art in Egypt, Africa and China.



The "surprise centre" invokes enthusiasm as the children experience some interesting dimensions of African tribal culture. Slides and tapes balance information about modern and traditional Africa.

Although the activity room has been the pivot point throughout the development of this project, it alone does not constitute the educational project at Courtland Park School. Instead, it facilitated the ongoing involvement and provided a focus for participation and unity school-wide.

The Orientation Committee

With the passage of Bill 71, the members of the educational community realized that Courtland Park school already had an orientation. The task before them was to clarify its focus and make it better known to the community.

The impetus for the formation of an Orientation Committee came from the teachers and the School Committee who approached the school board in June 1980. The committee was formed in September of the same year with the usual composition of three parents, two teachers, one administrator (the present head teacher), a non-teaching member (the school secretary) and a board representative. The main function of the Committee to date has been to consolidate its orientation and isolate areas of development which will extend and re-shape the educational project.

The first step in re-shaping was the formulation of a questionnaire which was distributed to the parents with the hopes of engaging them in a "paper dialogue" about the various aspects of the school plant and its functioning. The results of the data were tabulated, and from

these, the committee has produced the following statement which formalizes the school's orientation and operational areas of its project (Courtland Park, 1981):

Orientation of Courtland Park School

In addition to providing a sound academic base, Courtland Park School will continue to facilitate and encourage the enrichment of student life through a positive interaction with the community.

The Educational Project

The Courtland Park Educational Project will emphasize the development of sound intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth through:

1) the continued development of the Activity Room and the encouragement of an inquiring mind.

2) exposure to as many facets of human knowledge as possible.

3) the appreciation and preservation of the environment.

4) the development of an open-minded and tolerant attitude.

In implementing this project, priority shall be given to the further development of an Art and Music program.

Other Developments

During the current year, in order to involve the students more actively in the planning and decision-making, the Student Committee has been formed. Eight representatives are elected from grades 4 through 6. They meet bi-weekly and have direct input to the Orientation Committee and school administration through a "suggestion box" procedure. All suggestions are welcomed from the general student body. Then, at the meetings, the council discusses and makes proposals to the head teacher.

Other kinds of community involvement have also evolved. There is an annual Junior Olympics Day. Noon Hour Hobbies, initiated by the teaching staff as a result of student requests, involves community expertise for the hobby instruction.

With the practical dimensions of the project well underway, and the formal mechanisms operational, the educational community believes there will be an exciting future for all, as present trends are re-shaped and new ideas evolve. There is an optimism and satisfaction with the educational project as it has reached its current phase.

The Visible Identity and Commitment

At Courtland Park School the corridors and rooms reflect an atmosphere of congeniality. There is a hominess and enthusiasm as children's laughter is heard and teachers give a friendly hello to a visitor in the school. United efforts of children, staff and parents are visible in the current products displayed throughout the school. The staffroom is filled with animated people conversing over coffee during break time. What at first glance seems to be teachers, turns out to be an undefinable group of parents and teachers interacting happily. This friendly atmosphere, which attests to the unity within the school, is only one facet of its visible orientation. Probably, the other dimensions of its identity, can best be summarized in the spontaneous comments of various members of the school community. When asked to talk about their perceptions of the school. . .

Non-teaching personnel: "The school is friendly, it has a good atmosphere. There is a nice attitude with the kids. . ."

Parent Librarian: "There is always active parent involvement. The atmosphere is fairly free yet controlled. The community is a part of the school. The unique feature is the activity room. It is broadening in terms of the individual child and the outside world."

A teacher of 16 years: "There is a warmth and caringness. There is a strong relationship with the community because of the active school committee."

Teacher of 5 years: "There is a school identity. It is reflected in the friendliness and involvement."

Substitute teacher: "I like coming to this school. The atmosphere is open. The substitutes and volunteers feel an equality with the teachers. The activity room is unique. The children learn a lot and are motivated to continue learning."

Student Committee (grades 4-6): "It is a good school. It's friendly. It is interesting because of the activities. In the activity room it is not boring, we get to do things. We learn a lot from parents. The teachers are open, they tell what's happening before it happens. We get individual help. We have a good library. We have lots of assemblies. We are getting a new playground."

Kindergarten Children: "School is fun. I like school. The activity room is fun. . ."

What has evolved at Courtland Park School appears to have occurred naturally and easily, perhaps in part facilitated because it is a small school. However, hard work and dedication are apparent in all aspects of the school's functioning.

Knowledge of the school and a consensus about its identity are very

apparent in the school community. This positive consensus will change and grow through the time with plateaus, peaks, frustrations, and rewards. The ingredients are present, the mechanisms are in operation, what remains is the continued commitment of all people concerned.

The term educational project, or in Carl Rogers' terminology, "self-directed change in action", can perhaps best be analysed in his words:

> . . . In trying to help an educational system change itself in the direction of becoming more free, more communicative, with more self-reliant and self-directed participation. . . we are engaged in a process, the outcome of which we cannot clearly predict. Will it succeed? Will it fail? Even these questions are meaningless unless the terms ae defined, and the individual members of the system will have to provide their own definitions. . . . we can only say that significant process has been inaugurated. (Rogers, 1969, p. 341)

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UCATION, OFFICE OF RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

CHAPTER III

SIR WILFRID LAURIER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Leaving the old, both worlds they view
that stand upon the threshold of the new

Edmund Waller

Mary H. Maguire

A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN SEARCH OF CORE:

Episode I:
10:15 a.m.
April, 1981

Its overhelming size consumes a whole city block in Montreal North. It looks more like one of those mammoth comprehensive secondary schools rather than a junior high school, its officially designated hybrid status. On the first entry, I think the obvious: How can the bigness of the plant defer to these young inhabitants, a mass of varying sizes, needs, interests? The cafeteria is a lively and bustling hub of activity and a din of animated chatter. These students do not look alienated, plagued with self doubt nor addicted to extreme fads. There is even a distinctive warm, friendly ethos and humane character about this institution.

Two of these "early" adolescents approach me with a deliberate forth-rightness and inquire about the nature of my business. A look of disappointment registers on their faces when a quick retort reveals that I am not a "sub." I follow my willing guides upstairs to the second floor, impressed by their self-assurance and the ease with which they readily engage in conversation with an adult. Someone guards the entrance to the front hallway. She looks physically older than her twelve years. Her sophistication and poise continue to dispel the idea that bigness is noxious. There is a sense of personal responsibility about her. Socially confident and aware of her powers, she takes her $1.20 a day monitor position seriously.

Three of her peers race up the stairs and come to an abrupt halt in her presence. One seems like Shakespeare's "school boy with shining face". The other "bearded like the bard" himself. They engage in a three way conversationin three languages. English, French and Italian.

Monitor: Where are you going?

Student 1: I need to see Mr. Dion about the variety show.

Student 2: Je veux aller a la bibliotheque.

Student 3: Ai visto Marco?

Monitor: Where is your pass?

There is a seemingly free traffic of ideas, opinions and information being exchanged. I wonder if this is a more natural grouping of students. Are their social patterns similar? I focus on the student who is standing directly beside me.

Student 2: Do you know how heavy a killer whale shark is, Miss?

Student 3: About the same size as me (he stands about 5'-7").

Student 1: Ugh! One of . is bad enough

Student 2: Yeah, well you. . . . . .

This is probably one example of the snippets of information teachers in this school must have readily accessible.

The monitor interrupts this banter and delegates one of them to lead me to the conference room next to the Principal's office. Four

students and an adult are looking at the model car display in the front hall. How do they provide experiences suited to such diverse needs and interests of these early adolescents in this school?

Episode 2:
10:45 a.m.

Eleven department heads and the guidance counselor await the principal in the conference room. A voice booms over the public address system: "all department heads please meet in the conference room at 10:45."

10:50 a.m.

He enters. He has a way of talking and a decided presence. I understand why the impetus for the idea of this junior high school arose in him. He asks the assembled group, "How are we going to arrange core[1] *for the next year?" I have the school's written statement of purpose in front of me. I notice individuals are forewarned that "persons seeking a static situation will not feel at ease in this school" and that "teachers interested in working in the school should have a love of people and hence be prepared to see their students first as persons and secondly as students."*

1 Core is a method of organizing the secondary education curriculum into block time programs. Usually a block time replaces two or more completely separate periods such as English and Social Studies or Math and Science and is taught by a single teacher or a team of teachers. Core programs may be organized with a particular curriculum emphasis such as a fine arts core of music, art and drama or by interdisciplinary approach cutting across the boundaries of separate subjects taught in the secondary school in which a particular learning unit is central and occupies the learner's time.

The conversation switches to the teacher surplus situation next year. He informs the group that twenty-four teachers will be leaving the school this year. "It's important how we arrange ourselves. Do we need to change our priorities?" Before anyone has a chance to answer he jumps up and proceeds to make his way to the door. The secretary interrupts the conversation. She inquires whether he can greet a visitor and what time to schedule the interview for the transfer teacher who will be coming to the school next year?

He returns and talks about the practicalities of implementing core in terms of the number of sections, minutes, periods and the new teacher contract. He asks, "Can we provide teachers with examples of possible combinations?" The Math Department Head asserts, "It is easier to have an English teacher teach Math than a Math teacher teach English." Someone disagrees. Another department head interjects that to his surprise, his teachers actually enjoy teaching the core program. Another expresses concern if they are going to have to teach more than three subjects. She queries, "How competent can any one teacher be in three diverse areas like French, Geography and English?" The Principal interjects "We may have a problem with core; next year, History and Science will be half-year courses. How can we work out a teacher workload, preserve core and retain the integrity of the discipline?"

He suspends the interchange again to take a phone call from the Director of Human Resources who is inquiring about subject selection

and needs of the school. He returns and mutters that "the difficulty of finding and retraining teachers for junior high school cannot be minimized." They resume the process of reflecting and clarifying the curriculum for next year.

A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL: AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

This school reflects a distinctive outlook, concept and ethos. The course of development of this school's "plan of action" is circular, perhaps demonstrating that the concept itself is both product and process. Many elements of the project stand out; the school's underlying philosophy is explicit, but the process is ongoing.

The quest for core curriculum in this conference room is of utmost importance in the process of clarifying, evaluating the school's objectives and adapting to changing circumstances. They seem to have come full circle. The issues center on the present concerns the school is attempting to resolve: the aims and purposes of a junior high, its curricular and internal organization, the role and competence of teachers, social studies, math and science curricula, the means of establishing continuity between junior and senior high school.

In essence, the problem is both pedagogical and administrative. How to obtain a balanced team of teachers including specialists,

generalists and others for the specific purposes of the school? The resolution of this dilemma falls upon the principal, Kevin Quinn.

The school is Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School, a Catholic Secondary School housing, 1,125 grade 7 and 8 students, largely of Italian background. Approximately 550 new students from eight elementary schools feed into Sir Wilfrid Laurier from the Montreal North and Riviere des Prairies areas and 560 students exit out of this junior high school within the Province of Quebec nor within the Commission des Ecoles Catholiques Montreal. Sir Wilfrid Laurier is a very large Catholic Junior High School characterized by three main attributes: a definite and clearly stated philosophy; core curriculum programs which involve all teachers; and a distinctive, friendly ethos and humane character.

The concept of a junior high school or middle school (Plowden, 1967) is not a novel idea in itself. This model of school organization is designed to help early adolescents make the transition from the self containment of elementary school to the departmentalized and specialized structure of senior secondary school. What distinguishes Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a school with a unique character is, first, the evolutionary process of how this school transformed itself from an annex of a secondary school (Grades 7, 8, 9) into its present organizational structure as a junior high school (Grades 7, 8); secondly, how the school's program of activities and ethos reflect the general philosophy and statement of purpose on which the school was

founded. The variation of activities within Sir Wilfrid Laurier reflects the confessionality of the school, the reality of the early adolescents who attend the school and they cut across grade levels and subject matter disciplines.

Although the actual evolution of Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a junior high school, a school which has defined itself and created its identity, predates the concept of an Educational Project, the process of its evolution parallels the three stages envisaged by the MEQ.

The three stages in the evolution of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's educational plan as presented in Figure 1 should be conceptualized as a circular ongoing process of a single school formulating and reformulating its own identity.

THE EVOLUTION OF SIR WILFRID LAURIER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

FIGURE I

I. EMERGENT PHASE:		Birth and Formulation of Idea of a Junior High School	
	1. 1975	Lacordaire High School	An existing secondary school annex of Pius IX (Secondary 1, 2, 3)
	2. 1974 - 1975	Situation: CECM Reorganization	CECM Reorganization of Schools into Regions A & B Lacordaire to close.
	3. Early 1975	Dynamic Initiative	Principal, Lacordaire Unveils Statement of Purpose for Proposed Junior High School
II. DEVELOPMENT PHASE:		Formulation/Development of Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a Junior High School	
	1. Spring 1975	Plan of Action	Principal's Plan of Action and Planning.
	2. September 1975	Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School	Sir Wilfrid Laurier opens as a Junior High School
	3. 1975-1978	Stable Development	Development Core Program/Teachers
III. MAINTENANCE/ADAPTATION EVALUATION PHASE:		Reformulation/Maintenance/Adaptation/ Evaluation of Junior High School	
	1. 1978	Staff Upheaval: Maintenance of core Program	Beginning of loss of staff/ school closings.
	2. 1979-1980	Staff Upheaval: Maintenance of Core Program	Development and integration of new staff into core programs.
	3. 1981	Staff Upheaval: Adaptation of Core Program	Core program/school Philosophy re-evaluated in light of school closings/ teacher surplus/Regime Pedagogique. Development of House System

WHERE, WHAT, WHY AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT?

An Interview:
10:30 a.m.
June, 1981

SCENE: The scene is the office of the Principal, Kevin Quinn. Two teachers enter; they are remarkably similar in appearance and in age. The only notable difference is that one (Teacher A) is quite relaxed, having been with the school since its inception as a junior high school, while the other (Teacher B), a transfer teacher from a comprehensive secondary school who is about to be interviewed by the principal, appears nervous about the situation at hand. Quinn opens with the traditional social amenities and his favourite leit motif on not becoming a dinosaur in the teaching profession.

Quinn: How flexible are you in what you can and want to teach?

Teacher B: I've been teaching senior high history, geography and economics for the last eight years. I've had some experience teaching children with special problems. I'm also interested in wood working as a hobby.

The transfer teacher allows Quinn to begin his reportage of how this school came into being. Teacher A, a Department Head, knowingly alludes that he has heard the chronicle before. Quinn states that the school evolved as a junior high school largely in response to the specific situation in which he found himself in 1973 as Principal of Lacordaire High School, one of the two annexes, physically severed from Pius IX, a larger secondary school.

Quinn: We housed younger kids (Secondary 1, 2, 3) in a rented industrial building near the Metropolitan Boulevard. Although I was glad not to be plagued with the usual constraints of a senior high, i.e. rigid timetabling, graduation, year books, examinations, I felt the need for some changes in the organization and orientation of the school.

Look, the average number of teachers encountered by a child during the first six years of schooling is ten or twelve. Yet, the structure of this school was going to expose students to an average of thirty teachers during the first two years of high school. I deliberately solicited teachers who would be willing to teach a minimum of two subjects (i.e. Math/English) and scheduled these subjects concurrently or in block times. Because we were housed in a former senior high school and had some unusual resources like shops, science labs, and an amphitheatre, I introduced a fine arts core of art, music and drama, and a practical arts core of wood working, sheet metal and electricity.

Teacher B: The sharp lines between disciplines seem to be reduced to favor a more human relationship with the individual, but how were these changes accepted by the staff?

Teacher A: They were accepted by our staff for the most part, largely out of curiosity, although if left on our own, we probably would not have experimented with core programs. We did feel flexible to teach subjects separately or to correlate two or more subjects.

Quinn: (Interjects) Yes, I was concerned with developing a humane school. During 1975, I also had several conversations with Roy Bailley, Principal of Vincent Massey Junior High School, about how to make this transition from elementary to secondary high. During this year, seven schools within CECM were scheduled for reorganization both in structure and in personnel.[2] Because this proposed reorganization meant that in theory, these schools did not exist, I envisioned this situation as a unique opportunity to develop a junior high school with a strong element of choice with respect to both school philosophy and teacher selection.

2 In 1975 - 7 schools in regions A & B within CECM were scheduled for reorganization. The School Commission's plan for reorganization was the following:

i) John F. Kennedy High was to become a Comprehensive Senior High School
ii) Papineau was to become a Junior High School;
iii) Holy Names was to become a Senior High with an academic emphasis and no shops;
iv) Pius IX was to become Lester B. Pearson;
v) Lacordaire was to close;
vi) Pius X was the only school to be untouched by reorganization.

Teacher B: I hear that twenty-two transfer teachers will be coming to this school next year. Are you planning to interview them all like you are today?

Quinn: (Nods affirmatively) I want all teachers to know before hand what they are getting into. I don't think a mere written statement of purpose or orientation of a school is enough to ensure that a school will make any progress. (Quinn stops and reflects) It's easier to change the designation of a school but not so easy to change its teachers.

Teacher A: One third of this staff changes every year and we have lost a number of key people who were integral to the development of this school.

Quinn hands Teacher B the statement of purpose and states that all information sheets are published in English, French and Italian. (Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School, 980)

Quinn: I suggested to a fellow principal of CECM that all the principals write up a statement of purpose for their respective schools and this information be distributed before the issue of April transfer forms to all the 378 CECM teachers scheduled to be reassigned.

Teacher A: I think that you will find reflected in this pink sheet that all learning activities need to be uniquely keyed to each child in this school.

Teacher B: What does this <u>really</u> mean?

Quinn: What this really means is that children in this school are liked and can approach adults. I would like my teachers to do things in this school with good grace. <u>Flexibility</u>, I like to think that for any child who has a problem, modifications can be made. For example, this year we have five visually handicapped children and one hearing impaired child who are mainstreamed for part of the time into our core programs and we are also following the progress of twelve children with special problems throughout Multi-Disciplinary Team.[3] We attempt to solve

[3] Multi-Disciplinary Teams exist in all CECM schools. The consist of the Principal, Vice-Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Supervisor of Students, Social Worker, Attendance Office, Nurse and Chaplain.

the problems because of the effect on other kids.

Teacher B: I notice some older looking students in the hallway; they seem to belong more in the senior high.

Quinn: (Hands Teacher B the information sheets to be mailed to parents on the Retention Program). We have a Retention Program for high risk kids who are not likely to succeed in Secondary 3. Some are fifteen years old and are functionally disabled or behind two years in basic skills like English and Math. Most kids of this type drop out of school by grade 9. If we can buy them a successful academic year, we can ensure that they get into a long vocational program and might complete senior high school. These students come under Special Education norms. (See Stevens, 1979)

Teacher A: Some of these children are also helped by means of our Tutorials which are scheduled as part of a teacher's workload. These are designed to help a student in one particular subject area for a tri-semester (12 weeks). Twelve weeks seem more like a natural break.

Teacher B: How did you get all this through the Commission and the parents?

Quinn: Each region received a copy and approved the statement of purpose. I then wrote to the eight parent school committees of our feeder schools and invited parents to an organizational meeting to examine the statement of purpose, and to ascertain their views on the general orientation of the school. I then instituted a school committee which then approved the statement of purpose.

Teacher B: Do you mean that you had a school and a school committee before you had, in fact, a staff?

Quinn: Exactly. The next step was to choose a school name. Sir Wilfrid Laurier was chosen to reflect the harmonious relations that should exist between the two founding peoples of Canada. After visiting the children of the eight feeder schools and soliciting their written opinions, the name of the school was presented to and approved by the School Commission on July 10, 1975. I seized the opportunity to organize a staff from the grass roots. I interviewed all ninety-seven teachers who applied for the fifty-five available posts, as well as additional teachers because of the tri-semester core program in the practical arts.

Teacher A: You should mention that at these scheduled meetings you emphasized that coming to Sir Wilfrid Laurier meant an increased workload.

Quinn: To ensure a secure pattern of teacher-child relationships, I proposed smaller classes and more teaching periods but I was still within the norms of the collective agreement. I have less leeway now. Department Heads were appointed and a staff council formed. This new crop of young teachers were ready to exploit the school's envisioned notion of flexibility. Teacher A can describe the different ways we explored to group kids, experimented with team teaching, tri-semester (grade 7) programs and half-year courses.

Teacher A: In Cycle I, (Grade 7) we organized core programs around subject combinations like English/History and Math/Sciences. In Cycle II, (Grade 8) we organized ourselves with particular teacher-subject combinations of cores depending on the competence and interest of the teachers. (i.e. Geography and French). Next year, we will organize core programs by a House System and experiment with "coring" within the House. A House will consist of six teachers who will be assigned to four classes. This system may provide for both generalization and specialization within core.

Teacher B: This school seems unusually clean. What else can you tell me about discipline in this school?

Teacher A: The kids seem to take pride in this school and by and large respect school property. We suffer little from the chronic vandalism and absenteeism which are so characteristic of the large comprehensive high schools; yet we are as large in student population. Although this year, we have experienced some incidents of destructive behaviour. Our administrative agent says it's partly due to the nature of the school itself, the monitor system and the advisory system although this isn't working as well as it should. Perhaps it's really because they have a chance to be themselves "in these in-between years." Some of the pressures of the senior high have been removed. While there is probably no universally right age of tansfer for all students, the ages of 11, 12, 13 seem too early for important decisions to be made about the future education of these students. The Principal himself is interested in the building. It is not unusual to find him repairing a light switch after hours.

Teacher B: You both have spent a good portion of this interview emphasizing the philosophy of this school, which I take at the heart is the individual child. How do these core programs fit into this school's philosophy and facilities?

Quinn: Perhaps a tour of the school itself will clarify this.

REFLECTIVE REACTIONS: WITHER AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT?

Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School is an educational unit with a recognized identity, unique in character, philosophy, organization and ethos. Although this project was largely prompted by an individual's desire to devise a plan of action for a particular kind of school, the deliberations of its participants in all phases of its evolution have ranged far and wide and have relevance for the future of Quebec elementary and secondary English Catholic education in general.

This case study prompts consideration of what we do in schools, why we do it, how we carry it out and who should do it. Although specific grade levels may well become increasingly less important in future education, the present difficulties of providing curricula and housing for early adolescents cannot be minimized. The carefully monitored subject choice, teacher selection and process of consultation, which are characteristic features of this project's developmental phase, demonstrate that it is possible to meet the needs of early adolescents, by means of an integrated curriculum, by provision of opportunities for early development of leadership, individuality and initiative and by an enthusiastic and committed staff. However, this case study also demonstrates that the process by which a single school defines itself does not stop once the product has been created.

We may identify many of the project's features, the activities and endeavors which take place in this school and which have taken time to evolve. Some activities, like the monitor system and the retention program cut across subject matter disciplines while others like the multi-disciplinary team, mainstreaming, tutorials and extra curricular activities, cut across grade levels. Because others, like some of the core programs take place at specific grade levels and in specific curriculum areas, one might envision several Educational Projects taking place in this school.

However, despite the carefully thought out philosophy and plan of action, this educational project is not a static product. Episode 2 in the conference room demonstrates that the product itself is fluid and in a constant state of evolution. This suggests that schools will constantly be in a position of refurbishing their rationales in keeping with changing circumstances. In this sense, it is ironic that the concept of a junior high school is built on the concept of transience itself and that the essential competency for future youth will be the ability to cope with new situations.

Our educational system in Quebec is itself in a state of flux. While its future cannot safely be predicted, the Sir Wilfrid Laurier project raises more questions and issues than answers or solutions, and challenges some of our traditional assumptions underlying school organizations and the clientele they represent. Perhaps, the process of clarifying this school's curriculum and philosophy provides a model

for alternative patterns of school organizations to be introduced, patterns which may transcend the traditional dividing lines between elementary and secondary education. Although the Plowden Report on the middle school experiment in Britain concludes that there is no universally right age of transfer for all pupils, the Sir Wilfrid Laurier project suggests interesting possibilities for achieving desirable ends by re-arranging grade levels within school systems. However, the intriguing question is how a school like Sir Wilfrid Laurier can continue to prove its worth and accommodate the future as it unfolds.

Five process criteria have been proposed in the first Chapter of this book as necessary and sufficient for an educational project. In analyzing the Sir Wilfrid Laurier project in terms of these criteria a number of questions are raised about the future of English confessional education within this Province. The idea that a single school can transform itself into whatever it wishes as long as these five criteria are met is not as simple nor inevitable as it might seem.

1. Initiated from Within

The success of this project results largely from the impetus of a principal, known for his drive and commitment to quality education. In the development phase of this project, this Principal spent much time on curriculum decisions and teacher selection. He admits in the interview, with the transfer teacher, in Part II, that he has less

leeway now, with a shrinking system and teacher surplus, to build a stable, competent and appropriately deployed staff. This school was built on the commitment of its participants to the character and philosophy of the school.

If its character and survival are to be determined solely within the constraints of the teachers' collective agreement or the Regime Pedagogique, there are inherent dangers to an educational project like Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The obvious danger in the successful evolution of a project like this one is the decline in the freedom of a school to develop its own curriculum and deploy its teachers appropriately.

On the other hand, if an Educational Project can be interpreted to mean a school offering good educational service, one might envision with optimism increased teacher involvement in materials developed for units, mini-sabbaticals for specific program development or short term teacher leaves for in-service training. This demands of teachers a commitment to work with colleagues, specialists and non-specialists, to go on learning and to share knowledge.

The success of a project like Sir Wilfrid Laurier depended very much on the attitude of teachers and on individual teacher competence; it required dedicated teachers with a wide range of skills and interests. Discussion of this first process criterion demands something of the educational milieu for which it has not been particularly noted: unity and cooperation. The problem will continue to be how to avoid a

fragmented staff and school. How can something initiated from within, withstand conflicting external pressures like teacher relocation, school closings, rapidly changing curricula, technological and social change?

2. Reflecting Consensus

The successful evolution of a venture like Sir Wilfrid Laurier also depended on the full cooperation of its teachers, parents, students and administrators. The rationale for this school as a Catholic Junior High School is explicit; the school philosophy is known to the whole community as a result of a process of description, clarification and negotiation. In this respect, it reached consensus in its developmental phase.

It remains to be seen how a Principal can maintain this process of participatory engagement in clarifying the role and values of the school. From a staff point of view, how does one facilitate consensus in a time of teacher relocation and school closings? Consensus pre-supposes commitment. Is there a danger of the disease of non-attachment encroaching on a school like Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the light of these disruptions and uncertainties?

From a parent's point of view, the peculiar nature of the junior high itself with its two year program seems to mitigate against direct and continous involvement of parents. If an educational project takes time to evolve and if it is difficult to develop lasting relationships

with parents in a junior high, how direct can parents' involvement realistically be? Is direct involvement as suggested by the Orientation Committee a necessary condition for a successful educational project? Is there a danger that a formalized structure like an Orientation Council may deter the actual decision making process?

The parents of Sir Wilfrid Laurier demonstrate their support and confidence in the school by their full participation at social occasions such as open house and parents' night. Should this participation be construed as mere tacit support or might one envision different types of operational consensus?

If an Educational Project represents a collective project in which concerted action leads to consensus, how that consensus becomes operationalized also raises a number of questions. When a clientele is constantly changing as is the population of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the reaching of consensus presents an awesome challenge to a school administrator. In addition, the traditional dividing lines which exist between elementary and secondary school also exist between parent school committees. In a time when school closings and staff upheavals prevail, might we look for a new relationship between parent committees in the elementary and secondary schools of a community?

The existing pattern of small children attending small schools, early adolescents, middle schools and senior adolescents larger schools

might warrant a more careful differentiation between social growth and social pressures. What are the differences in students' self-image as a result of being involved in elementary, junior or senior high schools? What are the dangers of stratifying student populations by age? Should a junior high school house only early adolescents? Are such questions, as raised by the Sir Wilfrid Laurier project, best resolved at the local school level or within a larger school board context?

3. Fostering the Development of Participants

Whether there is really a greater concern for students and greater humanization of their educational program in this school as opposed to other junior or senior high schools is difficult to answer. The importance of meaningful participation and respect for individuals within this school community is constantly stressed. However, because every individual has a private set of meanings, this component is difficult to measure objectively. It is reasonable to assume that the participants bring their internalized meaning systems which are culturally and linguistically diverse. However, it may be said that there has been a genuine attempt on the part of the participants, administrators, teachers and parents in this school to organize teaching and learning so that it can be effective, meaningful and enjoyable for individuals.

The opening up of timetabling, space allocation and core curriculum content affords teachers and students options and opportunities for

choices to be made. It provides students with varying learning situations and teachers with a repertoire of teaching styles and opportunity for both to participate authentically in the life of this school. The notion of flexibility which is integral to the internal organization of this school allows for a shared, dynamic and creative interaction of meaning systems. For the majority of the participants this has resulted in positive interactions; for others, as one may find in any institution, the experience has been less enjoyable, less meaningful, and less profitable. Thus, the attempt at the centrality of the teacher-student relationship is perhaps, the most critical component of this school's project.

4. Evolving Through Adaptation

It is interesting that Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School evolved during a time of change and reorganization within CECM. The development of a house system for next year demonstrates that this junior high school does not seem to have lost its exploratory function. It presents a sense of warmth, innovation, of adaptability as well as coming a bit closer to making an institution speak to the needs and the potential of its clientele and to adapting circumstances within its community.

If a junior high school like Sir Wilfrid Laurier is kept fluid, it can serve as a good working model of administrative and instructional innovations that could improve any school, however organized. This is not to suggest that the model of school organization presented in this

case study is the only route to better education for early adolescents.

The concept of a junior high school received official public recognition and support with CECM in 1974. Although recent conversations with central office administrators suggest that there is every indication of their strong desire to maintain the junior high school, there are constraints which may impinge on their good intentions. A pressing dilemma is how to continue to preserve the existence of these junior high schools and smaller schools as the costs of operating the senior comprehensive high schools become increasingly prohibitive.

Ideas in an educational organization are destined to change. Economic pressures, uncertainty and social change seem to prevail; conditions change and people change. If change presupposes an element of choice, one might speculate on the choices participants in this project might be forced to decide upon as future "plans of action." A number of options are evident and will need to be resolved.

i) Should a school commission continue to maintain these mammoth secondary schools with their superior facilities and close down the smaller schools? or

ii) Should these larger schools be closed and the smaller neighborhood schools preserved?

iii) If they continue to maintain the larger schools and physically separate the junior high students in certain designated areas of the plant, can a school like Sir Wilfrid Laurier be moved in one piece and still retain its distinctive character and ethos? Is there then a danger of

the junior high school becoming a miniature departmentalized senior high school? or an endangered species? What would be the role of the department head if a House System were set up in such an organization?

iv) In a shrinking system, can a neighborhood school housing grades 1-11 be envisioned as a future model of school organization?

If a school is to continue as an organizational unit with all relevent factors in its organization focusing on the individuals, and the community it serves, these questions will need to be addressed but the answers will not be found easily. In this sense, the educational project provides a forum for dealing with substantive issues like school closings and teacher relocation.

5. Known About And Understood

This school presumes a kind of integration and unity amidst an aggregate of very diverse dimensions. It appears to have established a logical and consistent link between its educational ideology and its practice. Although no measurable results are available for this case study, it appears that staff, students, administrators when closely queried, are consistent in their perceptions of the function and purpose of this school. The visual signs of this school's project are very evident.

The metaphor of core, a feature of this school's curriculum, suggests a basic, essential enduring part. It would seem that the participants in this school's project are not asking should there be a core but they are sill in search of core. For some students and some teachers, there might need to be a variety of cores, different both in

organization and content. What subjects fit easily and naturally together and contribute usefully and meaningfully to an integrated core? Is there a danger that the metaphor of a core might lead participants to think of core as a finite product rather than a continous process of learning how to mean?

Many questions remain unanswered with respect to the complexity of early adolescents, their acquisition of knowledge, language and personal growth and the teacher's role in facilitating this development. The Plowden report in reference to the British Middle School experiments best describes the dilemma:

> If the middle school is to be a new and progressive force, it must develop further curriculum methods, attitudes. . . It must move forward into what is now regarded as secondary school work but it must not move so far away that it loses the best of primary education as we know it. (1967, p. 383).

In his summary report of a study done for the Professional Development Division of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation in 1980, Tony Flanders writes:

> Teachers are deeply embedded in the system and play an important role in its continuity. The socio-cultural role of teaching has been that of cultural transmission, the bringing of young people forward as participants in the continuity of the culture and the preparation of young people as participants in the evolutionary development of the culture's response to the future. (Flanders, 1980, p. 5).

The Sir Wilfrid Laurier project suggests that both teachers and the community they serve will find this role more and more challenging.

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CHAPTER IV

KEITH SCHOOL

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VIGNETTE

It appears to be a rather ordinary class, this sixth grade. The children are gathered around a student teacher; most are on the floor. They are discussing yesterday's field trip. Suddenly, strange grunts are heard coming from a child in a wheelchair. She is making thrashing movements with the upper part of her body. She has something to add to the discussion. The boy sitting closest to her opens a looseleaf binder.[1] She points to specific words as her assistant reads them out one by one. The student teacher repeats the girl's sentence as a more cohesive whole; the discussion continues.

This part of the lesson over, the children go off to different areas of the room to work on an assignment. The girl in the wheelchair is pushed to her desk. She begins, at once, to type.

In the afternoon the children line up for gym class. Another girl begins to cry. A friend offers comfort and notifies the teacher. The rest of the children talk in hushed voices. It is the last day in school for this girl. The following week she is scheduled to have an

1 In the binder is a Bliss board, a symbolic system for communication used by people who are unable to speak. The system consists of 500 colour elements. Variations in position, and number permit an extensive language production. The Bliss board is a grid of these symbols, as well as the words they represent. The user points to the symbol and the translator reads the word so all may understand.

operation on her hips. The children are attempting to understand what will happen, speculating on the outcome. In gym class, the teacher explains some rules and points about the game of badminton. All children try their skills in volleying the shuttlecocks back and forth. The four children in wheelchairs aren't having much success. The teacher tries a series of alternative measures. A successful adaptation is achieved by using sponge balls and rolling them along the floor from one child to the other. There is never a lack of willing partners to play this modified game of badminton with these four children.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

The School Community

The class described is one of sixteen classes in Keith School, 8340 David Boyer Street, LaSalle. The Educational Project at this school involves the mainstreaming of physically handicapped children. The principal is Miss Diane Brooks; staff assistant, Sheila Canci. There are nineteen teachers in all this year, including one free flow teacher, a gym teacher, and two French specialists.

The school serves a working class population. The boundaries of the school are Dollard Avenue on the west, Lachine Canal to the north, Angrignon Park on the east, and the Aqueduc of Montreal to the south. The families are mixed with respect to their ethnic origins. About 83

percent of the children are of Canadian anglophone parents. Another 15 percent are children of West Indian background. Children from Greek, Italian, Chinese and Japanese families comprise the remainder. In all 338 children attend the school.

The school, a single storey building, was constructed in 1968. Its plan is open, although it has a few self-contained classrooms. In the first three grades, family grouping is in operation. Several teachers have flexible team teaching arrangements. Other teachers make effective use of learning centres. It is a place where teachers feel comfortable to try new ideas, to work in innovative ways.

Although most parents attend the open house in the fall and meet with teachers during evaluation conferences, the Home and School Committee does not have many active supporters. A high proportion, 30 percent, of the families are single parent. Even in two parent homes, many of the mothers work.

The Inception of the Project

In 1978, Karen Hulme was making telephone calls to a number of schools, seeking places for some of the children at the MacKay Centre, a school for the handicapped. Karen Hulme, a teacher at MacKay for a number of years, was responsible for integrating non-handicapped children into the special classes at MacKay. But she felt that some of the children at the Centre were ready for a more normal educational program in a regular school setting. She appealed to Diane Brooks and

the teachers at Keith to consider taking these children into the school. Pansy Drury, a grade four teacher, and Marco Fraticelli, a grade five teacher, volunteered to teach handicapped children along with their regular students.

Processes in its Development

In the last months of 1978, one child on crutches joined the grade 4 class. He made such successful adjustment that he was enrolled as a full time student at Keith. Two children in wheelchairs began attending grade 5 on a trial basis for one morning per week. The teacher planned lessons from which he felt the children in his class and the two handicaped children would benefit. This arrangement proved so successful that the teacher and Karen Hulme began to discuss the possibilities of a fuller mainstreaming program.

Karen Hulme presented a plan for establishing a transition class to the teachers at Keith in the spring of 1979. She outlined the particular problems of all children being considered for the mainstreaming program. The objectives of the plan were discussed, as well as the ways in which the program would be implemented. Teachers were encouraged to express their feelings either in writing or through informal discussions about the proposal and to offer any suggestions. There was a certain amount of trepidation on the part of the staff, but they were all extremely interested in the idea and gave their support. The proposal was also submitted to the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal and the Ministry of Education.

Several teachers from Keith visited the Centre to increase their own awareness of the demands of working with these children. A floor hockey game was planned with a group of children from MacKay Centre and another from Keith School. Karen Hulme gave slide presentations. The nurse at Keith School discussed possible problems, helping teachers become aware, for instance, of the procedures to follow should one of the children have a seizure.

The principal sent a letter home with fourth graders toward the end of the school year asking parents how they would feel about having their child educated in a class with handicapped children. Many parents reacted positively to this plan for the transition class. Ten children were selected from the list of students whose parents had given approval. Five handicapped children were chosen after careful evaluation from the staff at the MacKay Centre. Their parents were contacted individually and the idea of the transition class was discussed fully with them.

A wooden ramp was built to enable children in wheelchairs to go down the three steps to the gymnasium. A staff bathroom was altered to accomodate these children. Ramps leading down the steps to the play yard were installed by the board. The Home and School Committee paid for the materials for a ramp to the lunch room; a grandfather of one of the students constructed it.

The original proposal suggested that this group of five students from

MacKay would remain at Keith for a three month trial period. Other students from the Centre might then be selected for this mainstreaming program. Because of the successful adjustment and integration of the students chosen initially, this period was extended for the remainder of the school year.

It was arranged for these students to attend Keith School for three full days and two half days per week. The rest of the time students were to spend at the MacKay Centre making use of their rehabilitation services: physiotherapy, communication skills, and swimming. The MacKay Centre was responsible for any special equipment, as well as educational supplies. One bus from the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal was provided initially for the students' transportation.

The Integration of the Handicapped Children

In the first weeks of the school year an assembly was held for all Keith students. The principal announced that handicapped children would be coming to Keith. The grade 5 teacher explained the purpose of the ramps and suggested ways in which Keith students might be able to help the children in wheelchairs. Parents not directly involved in the transition class were informed of the mainstreaming project during a "Meet-the-Teacher" night, that fall.

The project had also been outlined to the Keith School Committee. The members' comments were sought. The parents of the handicapped

children came to visit the school one evening before the term began, then were asked back to observe their children in the transition class. They were encouraged to discuss any concerns they had.

On September 10, 1979, the five children arrived in grade 5. The free flow teacher assisted in administering Stanford Diagnostic tests. In many academic areas, such as reading, the children were well behind their expected level of performance. Several had spent a considerable amount of time in hospital and had missed a lot of schooling. Appropriate educational programs were developed for each child.

A team teacher provided considerable support, assuming control of both classes when the teacher had to leave to tend to an emergency. Additional work on specific skills, to meet individual needs, was provided by numerous people, including teachers, the staff assistant, and a grade 6 student who volunteered to feed one of the quadriplegic children at lunch time.

The grade 5 teacher organized a special reading group for four of the five students. He found that these students were extremely diligent in their work, so earnest was their desire to be on the same level and in reading groups with the other Keith children.

These children had been selected because of their desire to be integrated into the mainstream of society. In spite of this strong motivation, they still had a considerable adjustment to make. At the

MacKay Centre the children had become accustomed to low student-teacher ratios, permissive disciplinary regulations and individual attention. He found that they were all very eager to fit into the real world. Peer pressure encouraged the children to modify their behavior, to develop more patience and understanding, and to become more socially adjusted. They gained increasing confidence, as they became more able to handle themselves in this educational environment with the rest of the children.

The classroom teacher also became aware of ways in which his ten regular children were changing. These children were extremely supportive of the five students, in helping them with academic matters, in organizing their activities and work, and in assisting them to adapt to the school environment. In giving this help to the handicapped children, the behavior and work habits of the ten regular students improved noticably. He felt that these ten children became "completely sensitized" to the handicapped in ways in which most people will never be. In addition, the two groups of children became very close, very attached to each other. Several special friendships have developed.

Changes in the Ethos of the School

The presence of these five children seemed to alter the behavior of all the students in the school. The children no longer seemed as impelled to run in the halls, aware, perhaps, of the difficulty they might cause should they upset one of the students in wheelchairs. Any

child within the proximity of a handicapped child was always willing to assist in any possible way. Their understanding of the problems of the handicapped increased tremendously through discussions in their own classrooms. Many teachers have shown films on handicapped people, available through the National Film Board. At first, several of the younger children had the idea that the handicap, as well as the wheelchair, was temporary; that these children would shed their problem as readily as a child with a broken arm gets rid of its cast. Now there is no awkwardness toward these children. The children in the wheelchairs are accepted as being a part of the regular student body at Keith School.

Among students and staff alike, the handicapped children have generated an attitude of compassion. For the most part, there is an unspoken, positive feeling throughout the school. It seems as if the inclusion of this group of children has brought out the best in the entire Keith community.

Many barriers have been broken. The handicapped children have been very open with respect to how they feel about themselves, and how they wish to be treated. One boy was quite explicit about his feelings. He felt handicapped children should be treated the same way as non-handicapped children, because they are the same except for their ability to walk. "We are human, too," he said. "Yes, we need help, but everybody does." One girl described the MacKay Centre as having a "hospitalized environment." At the Centre, when all around her were

in wheelchairs or on crutches, her own state of physical disability seemed to be emphasized. At Keith School, in contrast, she was able to compete on fairly equal terms with all the rest of the children. No one prevented her from attempting new feats. Her own handicap no longer seemed overwhelming. She, like the rest of these children, all seemed to sense an enormous accomplishment in learning how to cope in a regular school setting.

The handicapped children also thought that the academic work was more demanding at Keith. All the children were given assignments to complete within a set time; the same expectations were made of the handicapped children.

Academically, these children have done very well. The Stanford Achievement Tests indicated that they have made extraordinary gains. The criteria for evaluation is the same as for the non-handicapped, except in the area of fine-motor coordination. Several of these children depend upon typewriters for their written work. Others have been given special instruction in tasks such as handwriting. A few children have developed particular areas of strength and have been involved in a program for the gifted.

An Evaluation of the Project

The principal and teachers involved are convinced that the integration project is a complete success. No child from the MacKay Centre has failed to make a satisfactory adjustment. While everyone was

initially very cautious, they are very comfortable with the entire situation at present. Every teacher in the school has expressed a willingness to work with any handicapped child that the MacKay Centre feels is ready to make the transition. Problems are handled as they arise. Many of the difficulties that Diane Brooks anticipated have failed to materialize. The confidence of the entire staff in working with these children has increased tremendously.

The biggest problem was transportation. The children do not live in the Keith School area and must travel long distances. At first, one bus was provided, but the bus was often late. After considerable effort, two station wagons were also allocated for children with less serious handicaps.

There has been a shortage of financial support. Equipment that has broken, for instance the communicator on one of the children's wheelchairs, has often gone unrepaired. Teachers involved with the handicapped children have become very inventive and adaptive in meeting some special needs. An aide, part or full time, would help considerably and Karen Hulme has made a request to the Board for this additional personnel, but has not had a response to date.

Karen Hulme attributes the enormous success of the mainstreaming project to Diane Brooks and the staff at Keith School. Without the special support they have all received, the handicapped children could not have made such a successful transition. Similarly, the principal

values the role Karen Hulme has played in the project. As the liaison person with MacKay Centre, she comes to the school whenever she is called no matter how small the problem. She has also contacted countless sources for financial donations. Her support and encouragement have been greatly appreciated by everyone at Keith School.

The Future of the Project

In 1980-1981, eleven children from MacKay Centre were enrolled in four different classes at Keith School. The school is hopeful that twelve children will be mainstreamed in the 1981-1982 school year. The number of children that come from MacKay depends upon the decisions of the teachers at the Centre. They only recommend children for the mainstreaming program that they feel will make a successful transition and the parents of the handicapped children must also be in favour of this change. The final decision to have this project continue rests each year with the Board. Keith School remains willing and able.

MEETING THE CRITERIA OF AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

Does the inclusion of physically handicapped children in Keith School constitute an Educational Project? In the initial conversations with Diane Brooks, it was apparent that she had not, to that date, considered it in such formal terms. Mainstreaming physically handicapped children was seen as an effort, embraced initially by only

a few teachers, to provide an education in a regular school setting to children normally denied this access.

It is appropriate, therefore, to examine this mainstreaming effort with respect to the product and process criteria outlined in Chapter I.

PRODUCT CRITERIA

In terms of product dimensions, an Educational Project normally cuts across traditional divisions, such as subject matter disciplines, grade levels, etc. At present the mainstreaming effort directly involves only four classes at Keith School. If current proposals come about more classes will include physically handicapped children in the next school year. Every teacher in the school has expressed a willingness to work with these children. Yet one must conclude that, at present, although the mainstreamed children have certainly had some effect on the whole school, involvement of the whole school, could easily be increased.

Includes a Plan

Another product common to all Educational Projects is a plan designating an educational area for development. Keith's mainstreaming effort has had, as a central element, a well-defined plan. Initially, discussions of the idea were verbal in nature but

soon they were formalized in the Proposal for a Transition Class in April, 1979. The plan has continually evolved to meet the needs of the children and the staff.

PROCESS CRITERIA

Initiated from Within

The mainstreaming effort at Keith does not fully meet this process criterion, namely that the project be initiated from within. Karen Hulme, from the MacKay Centre, proposed the idea to the Keith staff. She has been present for purposes of consultation at every stage. There is, however, a considerable effort on the part of the entire school population to assure that the handicapped children are successfully integrated. The teachers and principal are determined to see that these children are totally integrated, that they receive the best possible education and achieve according to their abilities.

Reflecting Consensus

An Educational Project should involve elements of the community in the process of consultation and participation. The project at Keith does not fully meet this criterion. The handicapped children, with one exception, live beyond the boundaries of Keith School. The consultation with parents in the school community has been limited to explaining the plan and seeking their approval. Their direct participation in the actual mainstreaming effort has not been required.

Facilitating the Development of Participants

An Educational Project must serve to support the development of those involved. The handicapped children, as well as the regular Keith children and the teachers, are all very much affected by the mainstreaming effort. The attitudinal development of the participants has been described in the previous section, "Changes in the Ethos of the School."

Evolving Through Adaptation

An Educational Project adapts to the changing needs of the school and the people it serves. Throughout the course of the mainstreaming effort, the processes of adaptation have been taken into consideration. Initially three handicapped children were integrated into two classes for part of a morning, once a week. At present, the integration involves ten children and four classes. There is every indication that this involvement will increase.

Known About and Understood

A quality of transparence should be a feature of an Educational Project. The visual signs of the mainstreaming effort at Keith are ever present. These include the ramps, the larger desks, many with typewriters, and, of course, the children in wheelchairs. The effect this project has had on students and teachers alike becomes evident, as soon as one engages in conversation with any of the people in the school. The effort at Keith has become known throughout the immediate school community and beyond. Visitors, other administrators and

teachers, frequently come to the school to see the plan in operation. On February 21, 1980, a report of the project was featured in The Gazette. Many educators have come to consider the integration of the physically handicapped at Keith School to be a model project.

To summarize, the project at Keith School has a limited interaction with its surrounding community. At present, not all teachers are directly involved. On these two counts the mainstreaming effort does not meet the criteria for an Educational Project.

Yet, one must consider the commitment that is evident on the part of the school population, the developing nature of the involvement with the handicapped children, and the changes in attitude that have gradually pervaded the entire school environment. The strength of these dimensions lends credence in designating the Keith effort an Educational Project.

EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH DIFFICULTIES

Keith School's mainstreaming project is fulfilling the policy established in the Policy Statement and Plan of Action (1979) from the Ministry of Education in Quebec. This policy, supporting the recommendations in the COPEX Report (L'Education de l'Enfance en Difficulte d'Adaptation et d'Apprentissage au Quebec,1976), calls for ". . . promoting maximal integration of children with difficulties."

(p.60) A handicapped child, in order to have ". . . a system of education conductive to the full development of his personality . . .," must have access to a public education. (p.61).

Those instrumental in establishing this project at Keith School were committed to the successful implementation of this policy. They were also aware that time and effort were required for a satisfactory integration to take place. The teachers recognized their initial fears and anxieties, and proceeded cautiously and intelligently.

Edwin W. Martin, in the chapter, "Some Thoughts on Mainstreaming," recommends:

> If the majority of handicapped children . . . are to be spending most or much of their time in regular classrooms, there must be massive efforts to work with their regular teachers, not to just "instruct them" in the pedagogy of special education but to share in their feelings, to understand their fears, to provide them with assistance and materials. . . 1981, (p.241).

The ways in which the Educational Project evolved at Keith School helped to assure its success.

The Keith School community offered a helping hand, and has, ever since, realized the many ways in which its own life, its collective life, as well as the life of its individual members, has been enriched.

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CHAPTER V

WILDER PENFIELD SCHOOL

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This particular case study reports on activities within Wilder Penfield School located in Dollard des Ormeaux. The case differs from others in this book in that it involves three endeavours each of which relate to the Educational Project. Thus, this example is complex, demonstrating that educational reform often follows mixed patterns of development that do not follow a linear uni-dimensional model. The school offers an example of an environment where participation, rapport, competent educational services and a high degree of visibility are all evident. The common link between all three activities is the manner in which the school, by establishing these programs, has responded to the expressed needs and interests of the community. This response exhibits considerable leadership, commitment, concern and care amongst the involved individuals.

THE SCHOOL

Wilder Penfield School is one of nine elementary schools serving approximately 3,368 English students in the Baldwin-Cartier system, a school commission which serves both French and English Catholics. The Baldwin-Cartier School Board encompasses a large territory, including Dorval, Dollard des Ormeaux, Roxboro, Pierrefonds, St. Geneviève and extending as far as Ste. Anne de Bellevue. Wilder Penfield Elementary School, located in the then fast growing community of Dollard des Ormeaux, was built slightly over a decade ago to accommodate approximately 600 English elementary children. The school's name

reveals its aspirations, "to inspire all students to strive for the excellence and greatness which the name suggests" (Wilder Penfield School Handbook, 1980). While the school is organized along traditional lines, innovation is stressed. Although many changes, both internal and external, have occurred since the school opened, its reputation and involvement with the community remain at a high level, and its students still strive for excellence. As of September 1980 this school has incorporated the children from the neighbouring St. Luke's School into the various programs at all grade levels, K-6. Declining student population and the 1976 introduction of Bill 101 have been the major external changes with which Wilder Penfield has had to contend. Now, following the merger of the two schools, the student population approximates once again a total of 600 children. It is expected that this number will remain stable within the foreseeable future. The staff includes Mr. E. Samoluk, Principal, Mr. G. Neville, Vice-Principal, and a teaching staff of thirty, many of whom are specialists in different areas. Non-teaching personnel include a full-time bilingual secretary, and the school nurse who visits for one and a half days each week. A most efficient, friendly and capable group of parent volunteers operates the school library.

For the purpose of this Educational Project case study, three different programs, all operational at this time, will be reviewed. These are the French program and its various options, extra-curricular activities, and a parent-training program.

THE SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Given that this is a board wide program it may not be correct to define it as an Educational Project in the manner that M.E.Q. has defined such endeavours: 'a school involved in an Educational Project is to move towards establishing its own distinctive ethos.' As one of the most important objectives of this Second Language Program is a greater degree of curriculum uniformity, it is difficult to see prospects of diversification. However, individuality and teacher input are maintained in terms of choice of classroom strategies and use of materials. Teachers involved in this program state a definite preference for this flexibility and make use of their choices when developing instructional strategies.

In March 1976 the French Program Committee (consisting of administrators, teachers, parents, school commissioners, curriculum director) was established by The Baldwin Cartier School Board Executive Committee. At that time its mandate was as follows:

1. to review the second language program in the English section of the Baldwin Cartier School Board
2. to assess the validity of this program
3. to recommend modifications to the French Immersion Program
4. to recommend modifications to the regular French Program

In May 1977 a preliminary report on Second Language instruction was

issued. The consultative report prepared by the French program committee was deposited with Baldwin Cartier School Board in November 1977. The board granted permission to the committee to circulate this document for consultation purposes. As many groups as possible were consulted during the next two months. Parent Committees, Teacher Associations, the Association of Administrators, teachers, parents, and the Quebec Personal Guidance Association were all contacted and asked to participate at public meetings where not only the rationale for change, but recommendations would be presented and then debated. Through these series of meetings 1,350 parents were consulted. In addition, a special brochure was sent to the parents of 8,774 students. This pamphlet outlined the committee's recommendations and also included a survey form/questionnaire which parents were requested to complete and return to the committee. The survey was intended to obtain the reaction of the parents to proposed modifications to second language instruction. Replies were received from 2,791 parents, a 31.4% return rate.

In addition, several school committees, staff councils and professional associations and concerned individuals wrote responses to the committee. Six main concerns emerged from the issues raised in the consultative report by all the above mentioned groups. These are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Six Concerns and the Committee Response

Concern	Committee Response
1. Freedom of Choice	
Parents would be given choice to select program most appropriate for their child. Transfer option from one program to another if appropriate.	Committee endorses and supports concern. Right to transfer child will be respected.
2. Quality of English Language Instruction	
English education must not be jeopardized by implementation of proposed recommendations.	No adverse effects on the acquisition and development of English Language skills. Commitment to enhance present quality of English Language Programs.
3. Staffing	
Fear of insufficient numbers of qualified teachers to implement program.	Interviews conducted in elementary schools indicate an adequate number of qualified teachers presently available to allow Board to begin program in Sept.'78.
4. Program Development	
Insufficient time and funding to ensure development of program.	Nov.'77 writing and development of programs begun by team of Baldwin-Cartier teachers and professionals in relation to subject areas requiring French as Language of instruction. Some of these programs,

	plus other acquired Early French Immersion programs from the School Board provide necessary elements to meet program requirements as this committee has defined them. Problem area: finance - still need more to implement program, but optimistic for good resolution.
5. Learning Difficulties	
Children in difficulty would not be offered immersion programs, might not be able to cope, or Special Education Services not available in French	All children enjoy the same rights, including the transfer option. Initial difficulty in providing remedial services in French but commitment to resolve as soon as possible.
6. Students Presently	
In our system students in place would not be provided with additional opportunities to learn French.	Consensus that students need greater exposure to French. Therefore, recommendation that the Extended French Program will eventually become a sequential extended program throughout the elementary school.

Finally, the double objectives of providing quality education in English and providing the opportunity for graduates to be competent in French were presented in February, 1978. The many divergent views were then explored through debate and discussion. The entire issue

became as emotional as it was pedagogical. The final recommendations which had been subjected to intense scrutiny emerged. Granting all parents Freedom of Choice the following programs were presented for their children:

1. Early Partial French Immersion
2. Extended Regular French Program
3. Late Total French Immersion Program (Grade 6)

The French Committee decided that a standing committee for all the French Language Instruction Programs (F.L.I.P.) be established forthwith to review the progress of the implementation. It was also agreed that a critical path plan with target dates would be developed for April, 1978 by the Director of Curriculum Services. Another of the standing committee's tasks would be to assess the program in relation to the plan twice a year.

Teachers were encouraged to make use of French informally. Some extra-curricular activities should be offered in French to facilitate informal contact with the French-speaking community.

Since September 1978 Wilder Penfield has been very much involved with all three French Immersion Programs. Primary Teachers have had a great deal to say in terms of the proposed original curriculum and changes they felt to be necessary and crucial. They have made and/or selected materials they consider to be more appropriate than those

originally available. There are now some excellent materials designed by the French Language Consultants and the Primary Teachers; these are available for any interested teacher. Teachers remain free to select their own instructional strategies and some report their preference for the use of learning stations while others prefer a more structured approach.

Classroom teachers meet twice a year with colleagues who share similar teaching situations. These meetings provide an opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of programs at particular grade levels. They also allow teachers to share materials and discuss effective teaching strategies. At Wilder Penfield, certain aspects of the initial curriculum and certain curriculum materials were found to be inappropriate. Discussions and lobbying led to a six-month release for a teacher to plan and design more appropriate curriculum and materials. It is the program's flexibility and the ease with which it appears to accommodate the views of all involved whether teacher, parent, child, administrator, or consultant that constitute to some measure the success and positive feeling that this particular program promulgates.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The extra-curricular program represents an important aspect of the manner in which the school responds to its community. Since the

school's inception, the activities are those that have evolved from participants' interests and initiatives. However, all clubs play some small role in the school's search for academic excellence. As many children are bussed to school, these sessions usually take place during the lunch hour. Clubs meet for an hour once or twice a week. Most of the clubs are for Grades 3-6 students.

Every year new clubs are formed and others disbanded. Towards the end of each academic year, current student interests are explored and discussed with the teachers and the administration. A potential list of clubs for the following year emerges. The clubs are intended to satisfy curiosity, develop interest, intellect and provide enjoyment for the student. A variety of activities, lectures, and presentations by outside experts form the core program of a club as shown through the following examples:

The Math Club

This club, now in its second year of operation, meets during lunchtime twice a week. There are three different levels at which a student may participate. A test is given to place a student at a suitable level of competence. For example, Tuesday is the weekly remediation session and three teachers help out with this group. The regular and above-average students meet on Thursdays to improve and expand their skills and play Math games. On Friday afternoon, after school, an accelerated group of gifted children participate in Math skill acquisition in order to compete in the Quebec Math competition. Last

year this group won the top prize in the province and the Quebec Math Teachers' Award is proudly displayed in the school library.

Students and Teachers alike enjoy the many varied opportunities for development that this particular club offers. Total enrolment for all sessions is approximately 125 students.

The Science Club

"The Mad Scientists", a group of twenty-five grade 5 students, meet once a week over lunch to discuss their interests in science. This club was created this year by the Vice-Principal who sensed a need to create greater interest in Science. Quite a large number of students showed up. A list of potential areas to be explored was discussed. To date the following topics have been on the agenda: Orienteering, Forensic Science, Working with Carniverous Plants, and Electronics. Projects on Volcanoes and Acid Rain have been designed and developed and will be displayed at the Parent's Open House next month.

Sports

At present there is also a Running Club directed by the Physical Education teacher. Club members meet twice a week to jog. Students involved in this do so for enjoyment, though some may be doing initial training for fun-run marathons outside the school. There are also two sports clubs this year. One is the grade 6 Basketball Club which meets once a week at lunch-time to play and practice in order to compete with other schools. This team will be going to a Mt. Bruno

School next month (June, 1981) to compete against a similar team in a South Shore community.

Journal Club

This club involves Grade 4 children in a journal writing experience. These children are exchanging journals, on a regular basis, with another Grade 4 class at Valois Park School, serving the Lakeshore School Board. In June, 1981 both groups will actually meet one another for the first time after having corresponded for this past academic year.

The evaluation of clubs is not formal, whereas the French Programs must be looked at with greater seriousness for obvious reason. Yet plans are being made for the future - in terms of which clubs to maintain, which to terminate, and which to begin.

Next year, the Principal has agreed to organize a chess club for Grades 3-6. The group will meet once a week to play chess and learn new strategies. Some members will work diligently so that they may compete in intramural or perhaps even provincial tournaments. As there is also a high interest in drama and acting in this school, a Drama/Creative Writing Club is planned for next year. This group will, for its annual project, write, act and produce Alice in Wonderland for the Wilder Penfield School Community. A Netball Club will also be started next year. The commitment and financial support of the School Committee has made possible the purchase of all the

necessary uniforms and equipment. This particular club will, then, be off to a good solid beginning. Not only will there be interested student participants, but a very enthusiastic community will support their endeavours on the field. The parents obviously feel very much a part of the school - they appreciate the time and interest that this dynamic staff and administration donate to these lunch-time clubs. The children involved benefit, enjoy, share and learn much from these varied exposures and experiences.

The Systematic Training for Effective Parenting Program (S.T.E.P.):

S.T.E.P. is a program that evolved because of growing parent concern about their children. Many parents had expressed concerns about their families and looked to the school for answers. This year, the principal and vice-principal decided in collaboration with the School Committee to organize and implement this S.T.E.P. program. A nominal fee was charged to parents; the remainder of the expenses were carried by the School's Parent Committee. The school decided the program would be more effective if an outside professional ran the program. The School Parents' Committee agreed to this decision.

This program has a study method that involves reading, discussion, and exercises reflecting typical concerns, as well as encouragement of and by participants. Parents then attempt to put these newly learned principles and techniques into practice in one's own family.

The leader's role is not to answer questions as such. He facilitates

discussion of the materials, keeps the group on task, leads the exercises and makes assignments drawn from the S.T.E.P. Parents' Handbook.

The program's goal is to graduate more effective parents.

Once again Wilder Penfield School has shown, through its concern, commitment and initiative that it is responding to community needs. This particular time it was the parents who received the extra attention.

CONCLUSION

Wilder Penfield School is a school that promotes a strong professional image and has a solid relationship with its community. Although, as originally stated, there is no official Educational Project in action, there are many things that occur in this school that further the developmental bond between school and community, notwithstanding the fact that this school has stood for and maintained its excellence for fifteen years.

The school has reacted to community concerns and interests through it's S.T.E.P. Program and Extra-curricular clubs. While the traditional mode of teaching prevails, excellence through many interesting avenues exist. Committment, care and initiative on the part of the Wilder

Penfield staff all contribute to the community perception that this is a warm, inviting and envigorating environment in which their children may participate. If this school were in business, it would be a successful company.

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CHAPTER VI

FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN LENNOXVILLE

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PREAMBLE: AN EVENING WITH PARENTS

April 6, 1981: Over one hundred parents and others are gathered in the gymnasium of the Lennoxville Elementary School. They have come to find out more about the program of instruction in French as a Second Language which the Lennoxville District School Board has been running since September 1979. The children of some of them are already in the program, while others will expect to enter it at the beginning of the next school year.

The evening begins with a brief introduction by Hugh Auger, the Board's Director General, and by Marguerite Knapp, its chairperson. A slide-tape presentation follows, explaining the main elements of the program and illustrating in a graphic way how the program actually works in the classroom. The tone of the presentation is understandably upbeat and positive. Next, two professors from McGill University tell the audience how the research they have conducted has helped to monitor the progress of the program and, in general, to show that it has been successful. The evening finishes with a panel discussion in which questions from the audience are addressed.

The questions which the parents ask are of themselves instructive since they illustrate the concerns which some of the parents feel...

> Did the intensity of instruction in French in the Lennoxville program mean that other aspects of the curriculum were short- changed?

The level of French of the children shown in the slide-tape presentation seemed very high. For how long had they been in the program?

Did the obvious enthusiasm for French which the children in kindergarten exhibit persist into grades 1 and 2?

More important, what will happen later? Will the children really be able to function bilingually? Will they perhaps lose their French in high school if no comparable program exists there?

The answers to these and to other questions will become apparent in this chapter. At this stage it is the questions themselves that are of interest. A program such as that being run by the Lennoxville School Board can only be completely successful if it has full parental support. The program came into being in the first place because it seemed to meet a need which parents had themselves expressed. They wanted their children to " be English, but speak French." It is clearly important that they should feel at all times that the program is continuing to achieve that objective.

The episode described above touches on the dynamics of curriculum innovation. As a system is changed in order to achieve a particular set of goals, new problems are created. The overall success of a curriculum innovation such as the one described in this chapter depends on the degree to which these problems can be resolved in a manner which satisfies the community which the school serves. Parents are noticeably sensitive about the success of experiments on their own children; their questions indicate those areas where they are most in need of reassurance.

THE PROGRAM IN A NUTSHELL

The objectives of the program are concrete. They are that, at the end of elementary school, each child should (i) understand spoken and written French; (ii) speak French fluently and colloquially; and (iii) write French at a basic level.

The means by which these objectives are to be achieved are uncommon in Quebec, and consist of two major elements. First, a full-time bilingual kindergarten is available which all pupils in the system attend. Second, during each year of the elementary school in grades 1 through 6, pupils spend a full sixty minutes each day, or a total of five hours each week, in an intensive French program.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

The Eastern Townships is one of the few rural areas of Quebec in which English people have traditionally been a numerical majority. It is only within fairly recent memory that the Eastern Townships have lost their predominantly "English" character as French speaking people have become more numerous and have spread across the social and economic spectrum. Increasingly, the English language community has come to feel the need to bolster a culture which it sees as beleaguered.

The English language educational system of the Eastern Townships

exists in a context of declining enrolments and of competition in some cases from its French language counterpart. The educational component of the Official Language Act ("Bill 101") has effectively barred French speaking children and the children of many immigrants from attending English language schools, while demographic changes have reduced the total numbers of potential pupils. The problems of English language educational institutions are compounded by the fact that many parents decided during the 1970's that their children were more likely to become bilingual by attending French language schools.

The Lennoxville District School Board came into being in 1972 with the union of four smaller school boards, those of Lennoxville, Sherbrooke, Stanstead and Compton. It now administers nine elementary schools in Sherbrooke, Lennoxville, North Hatley, Ayer's Cliff, Magog, Rock Island, Cookshire, Sawyerville and Bury. Each of these schools had espoused different approaches towards the important area of French as a Second Language. On the one hand, North Hatley Elementary School provided an acceptable bilingual program in which one-half of the total instruction was in French and one-half in English. On the other hand, the Rock Island school provided very little French instruction. The norm for the other schools was thirty or fewer minutes of instruction per day, although in all cases except Lennoxville this was provided by non-specialist teachers who set up their own program of studies. It was apparent that some form of coordination would be necessary and in 1975 a committee composed of teachers, parents and administrators was struck to evaluate existing programs and to make

recommendations for change.

PARENTS' VIEWS

From the outset, the committee recognized growing pressure from parents to improve the quality of French instruction, for they realized that if their children wished to stay in the region and to obtain jobs there, they would have to be competent in the French language. The call for some kind of action was spearheaded by a few articulate parents in the Lennoxville area many of whom were themselves teachers in the Alexander Galt Regional High School, Champlain Regional College or Bishop's University. These were parents who knew of change elsewhere in the province and in particular of the well-publicized full immersion programs of the Montreal metropolitan area. In their own local school, the Lennoxville Elementary School, they had supported the establishment of a "Six Plus" program in which pupils remained in elementary school for one further year before high school in order to participate in a partial immersion experience.

Parental opinions are well illustrated by a questionnaire which the Board administered in 1975. Fifty-eight percent of respondents felt it was "very important" for their children to learn French, and 88 percent would encourage their children to participate in activities that would improve their use of French in the home and the community. However, 70 percent were opposed to <u>all</u> subjects being taught in

French in some grades and 66 percent did not even want some subjects taught in French if this implied any deterioration of the English curriculum (CSDL, March 1976). This would seem to indicate that there was not at that time a strong area of support for true immersion programs which would, among other things, have required costly and time-consuming bussing of children to those schools offering the immersion option.

TEACHERS' VIEWS

The committee was also concerned about the relationship between the Board and its existing teachers. A position paper from the Director General which had formed part of the committee's mandate (Auger, 1975) had clearly indicated the need for at least one fluently French-speaking teacher in each of the Board's schools and that, moreover, this teacher might have responsibility for teaching in subject areas other than French as a Second Language. The fact that English speaking teachers felt their positions threatened by the expansion of French instruction had already been demonstrated dramatically in a teachers' walkout at the Lennoxville Elementary School in May 1974. Teachers wanted reassurance that new programs would not place their positions in jeopardy.

In general, the view of ETAT (Eastern Townships Association of Teachers) as expressed by its president was that, while its members

recognized that some change was in order, they felt that it should be evolutionary. Above all, teachers should be involved in consultation and should not have imposed upon them programs which would either require a complete change in their day-to-day professional activities or would put their jobs at risk (CSDL March 1976, FSLC meeting Dec. 10 1975). It was the task of the committee, then, to steer a course between extreme positions and to produce recommendations which would satisfy both parents and teachers.

SIXTY-MINUTES PER DAY OF FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

In its final submission, the committee recommended that in addition to the existing thirty minutes each day of French as a second language, a minimum of a further thirty minutes of instruction each day be provided in French in not more than two subject areas. In the program that was eventually implemented the fundamental change was made that this minimum of sixty minutes each day be devoted exclusively to teaching French as a Second Language. It is worth considering why this change was made since it has strong implications for the implementation of the program and indeed can be seen as its dominant characteristic. Primarily, it was argued by the Director-General and accepted by others that materials structured according to the logic of instruction in the second language rather than to that of some other subject were likely to have a much stronger impact. Also, separating instruction in French as a Second Language and other subjects should

both be less threatening to non-bilingual teachers already employed by the Board and would avoid the necessity of engaging French specialists with competence in other subject areas. Thus, this one element resulted in the programs meeting the objectives of both parents and teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM

The question of the implementation of any curriculum innovation is invariably of most interest. In the case of the Lennoxville Board's French as a Second Language program, three elements were involved in implementation, namely, (i) staffing and financial arrangements, (ii) the provision of instructional materials and facilities and of appropriate changes of scheduling and (iii) testing and evaluation.

Staffing and Financial Arrangements

Staffing problems had two major dimensions. In the first place, there was an insufficient number of suitably qualified people on the existing staffs to mount the program. It would, therefore, be necessary to provide opportunities for staff to be trained, and for new staff to be engaged. Recognizing that the final success of the program would depend upon the quality of its instructors, the Board decreed in May 1979 that all teachers of French in the kindergarten and of French as a Second Language at all grades of the elementary school must have a specialist diploma in Teaching French as a Second

Language. In order to upgrade the competence of existing teachers, an arrangement was made by which the MEQ reimbursed the Board for the salaries of teachers released for further training. A number of teachers were given leaves under this arrangement and, in addition, McGill University mounted appropriate courses in Lennoxville. As a consequence, 21 teachers obtained their specialist diplomas between 1975 and 1981, 14 of them in May 1981. In addition, new staff were needed in order to provide sufficient teachers both for the full day kindergarten and for the more intensive approach and lower pupil-teacher ratios of the other grades.

Clearly, these problems could not have been solved without unusual support from the MEQ. MEQ provides funds to each school board on the basis of a ratio common to all schools in Quebec. Additional funding would evidently be required to provide for pupil-teacher ratios below this provincial norm in the elementary grades, and to provide also for teachers for the full-time kindergarten (see Table I). In addition, since the board saw the desirability of monitoring the program, funds were requested for ongoing research and for the preparation of instructional materials. It was seen as being especially important that this research be done by an impartial outside agency rather than by the board's own officers.

TABLE I: STAFF NEEDS, AND ENROLMENTS, 1979-80

Schools	Enrolments		Extra FSL Specialists	
	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6
Bury	12	66		
Cookshire	12	89	1.0	0.5
Sawyerville	10	90		
Ayer's Cliff	9	92	0.5	0.5
North Hatley	10			
Lennoxville	30	302	0.5	2.0
Magog	25	164	0.5	1.0
Sherbrooke	20	126	0.5	1.0
Rock Island	20	132	0.5	1.0

Instructional Materials, Facilities and Scheduling

Preparation of instructional materials required additional expenditures. For the kindergarten the program was in past based upon materials produced by the Ottawa Separate School Board but considerable adaptation was required to meet local circumstance. For cycle I, new materials were specifically designed for the Lennoxville program. For cycle II, which also moved to a sixty-minute-per-day program materials were acquired from the Laurenval School Board to be used until new original materials are prepared. Photocopying and the preparation of overhead transparencies and 35 mm slides demanded an expenditure both on materials and on additional support staff.

According to the program plan it has been recommended that each school set aside a separate classroom for the teaching of French as a Second Language. Since most of the schools at one time contained a high school population, there was no lack of space to provide a separate classroom. The expense of furnishings and equipment have restricted

some kindergarten classes to one room for both English and French instruction. However, all schools have separate French classrooms for all French instruction for grades 1 through 6. Most schools have now implemented the one-half day French Kindergarten and the 60 minutes per day in the other grades. Two exceptions to this are to be found in North Hatley and Rock Island. North Hatley uses the basic program but has retained from its bilingual program an additional 30 minutes per day of French instruction in a specific subject area. Rock Island, on the other hand, has reduced the 60 minutes per week to 40 minutes per week for their regular grades 1 through 6 students in order to provide some French instruction to the Special Education classes in the school.

Testing and Evaluation

An important part of the program has been the schedule of tests administered under contract by McGill University's Office of Research on Educational Policy. The objectives of the testing program have been to measure the progress made by pupils in their acquisition of the French language and to measure also their general linguistic and cognitive development. Since details of the testing program are published elsewhere (OREP, Nov. 1980), it would be inappropriate to recapitulate them here. However, the general conclusions are worth repeating. First, as might be expected, the children showed considerable gains in their knowledge and use of French; secondly,they also showed an improvement in skills and competences not explicitly included in the program.

AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT?

It remains to be seen whether Lennoxville's new French as a Second Language program may correctly be described as an "Educational Project" in the way that this term has been defined by the MEQ and in Chapter 1 of this report.

Clearly, the program which this chapter has described contains an important element which may distinguish it from other "Educational Projects", namely, that it has been implemented in a number of schools rather than in one single school. If the sine qua non of the Educational Project is that it be the means by which a single school moves towards establishing its own distinctive ethos then the Lennoxville program is not strictly speaking an Educational Project. An important result of the program, indeed, was that it should produce a greater degree of uniformity among the Board's different schools than existed before.

However, this may be a mere point of semantics revolving around the use of the word "school". The Lennoxville Board administers nine schools, it is true, but it could be argued that these nine schools constitute a unit for educational purposes and that geographical separation is irrelevant. For the Lennoxville Board, the major aim has been to "situate in its milieu" this entire unit, making it increasingly responsive to the use of the French language in the Eastern Townships, to new patterns of social interaction and of

vocational opportunity which these had brought about, and to the expressed desire of its own clientele to accomodate more effectively to these changes. Whether the unit in question consists of one school, or of nine, may not be of great consequence. Nonetheless, it must be born in mind when the five principal criteria derived in Chapter 1 are brought into play.

1. Initiated from within

No curriculum innovation stands completely alone. Lennoxville's French as a Second Language program draws out of the professional experiences of its major promoters as well as from models provided from elsewhere. With this caveat, however, it has to be recognized that the essential nature of the program grew out of needs perceived within the area and interpreted and translated into specific instructional strategies by the Board's own personnel. As far as individual schools are concerned, they were, of course, required to accept a program indeed "imposed from above".

2. Reflecting consensus

The imposition, if such it was, seems on the whole to have been received willingly. Complete consensus is a rare commodity, but within reasonable limits of tolerance Lennoxville's program seems to have been accommodated to meet most potential sources of conflict, at least for the time being. Grants above the staffing norms have calmed the fears of English speaking teachers that the program would put their jobs at risk, although the fact that these grants have to be

applied for on a year-to-year basis is a source of continuing concern. So far, however, the quality of instruction in regular classes has, if anything, been improved by the generally lower pupil-teacher ratios. These grants have made smaller classes possible and teachers have all benefitted by gaining more time for preparation and remediation. At the same time, the conflicting desires of parents that their children become both fluently bilingual and at the same time lose nothing from their existing curriculum seem on the whole to have been resolved.

3. Facilitating the Development of Participants

The Lennoxville program contributes to the development of its participants at a number of levels. Parents would certainly appear to feel more directly involved in a process which has implications beyond the school. Not only do they hope that the program will more adequately prepare their children for better social and vocational involvement in Quebec society, but that perhaps by extension they themselves may be less confined to their own linguistic community. According to those involved in the program, the attitudes of many parents towards their French speaking neighbours have been changed simply by virtue of their own children speaking and understanding French -- and, perhaps for the first time, having a French speaking teacher.

For teachers also the program has provided the opportunity for development in both a formal and an informal sense. In-service training has provided the opportunity to obtain a French specialist

diploma: at the same time the influx of French speaking teachers has increased other teachers' awareness of French language and culture. The authors noted in all the schools they visited the frequency with which French was used in staffrooms, although they also noted that this could produce feelings of isolation in the incorrigibly unilingual.

4. Evolving through Adaptation

It is, of course, too early to say with confidence whether the Lennoxville program will be truly adaptive to changing circumstances, or to predict the kind of circumstances which would make such adaptation necessary. One of the problems of basing curriculum development and dissemination upon instructional packages is that the investment of time, effort and money which has been put into their preparation discourages change and individual initiative. There is always the danger of placing the emphasis on "product" rather than "process". So far, however, frequent workshops have maintained a high degree of involvement from teachers and the program has been found to be sufficiently flexible for individual teachers to place their stamp on materials produced at Board level.

5. Known about and Understood

A program of parent sensitization operated with the assistance of McGill University staff, the preparation of the slide-tape presentation referred to earlier, and good publicity both in the local and in the Montreal press have helped to assure that the program will

be as well known as possible. The dispersed nature of the region's population presents problems, however, and it is inevitable that the more peripheral communities will feel a less direct involvement in the program and will know less about it than those at the centre. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the Lennoxville town community, with its higher proportion of professional people has a higher intrinsic level of interest in the educational enterprise than the other outlying rural communities. An important task for those involved in the program may well be that of maintaining the level of interest and involvement of parents in these communities as well as in Lennoxville itself.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Lennoxville experiment contains two elements which are of general interest. First, it provides a potential alternative model to full immersion programs and if it were to be found to result in a comparable level of second language competence, might indeed be considered in some ways superior to full immersion. Secondly, from the theoretical point of view it lends a new dimension to the definition of the Educational Project. The most interesting aspect of the Lennoxville program is that it <u>is</u> applied across all the schools of a particular board rather than to a single school.

Education in the province of Quebec is delivered by "systems"; in

common parlance, the term is used to refer to the entire educational enterprise or to a particular administrative unit. In fact, the educational enterprise comprises a single system consisting of a number of sub-systems, some overlapping and most occupying a niche in a rather complex hierarchy. Where the limits of a system and of a sub-system are drawn is always, let it be remembered, a matter of methodological convenience, since "systems", like beauty, exist largely in the eye of the beholder. With regard to the Educational Project, the sub-system in question may be defined as that part of the total educational system which is open to those influences from the milieu which call the project into being. For some Educational Projects, the appropriate sub-system may indeed be the individual school as suggested by the MEQ.

For others, however, it may consist of groups of linked schools, the "consortia" which exist for some British School Council projects. For yet others, as for the program described in this chapter, the most appropriate sub-system might be a school board.

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CHAPTER VII

THE ART OF PROJECT-ING: ILLUSTRATIONS, IDENTITIES, AND ILLUSIONS

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As we reflect on these case studies, three questions arise. To what degree do these schools provide illustrations of Educational Projects? What is the status of Educational Projects in English-language education in Quebec at the present time? What are the implications of Educational Projects for the future? The short answers are "Yes," "Ambivalent," and "Radical."

ILLUSTRATIONS

The five schools which are described in the case studies are not necessarily the best in Quebec, nor are they different or "alternative" schools, nor are they specially privileged, nor are they, on the other hand, typical of all schools. They do provide different illustrations of what is happening in schools, in Quebec, in 1981. They represent, to some degree at least, the diversity that is found among English-language schools. Some, like Keith, Courtland Park, and the Lennoxville schools are within Protestant School Boards; others, like Wilder Penfield and Sir Wilfrid Laurier are English-language schools within Catholic School Boards in which the majority of the population is French-speaking. Two schools, Keith and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, are urban schools serving a mixed middle and working class population; Wilder Penfield is in a west island suburb of Montreal; Courtland Park is in St. Bruno, a suburb/exurb some distance south of Montreal; the Lennoxville schools are scattered over the rural and small town areas of the Eastern Townships. Four of the

schools are elementary schools and one, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, is a junior high school.

The schools also illustrate some of the important issues in education at the present time. Keith is an open-space school that has been attempting to mainstream physically handicapped children in collaboration with the MacKay Centre for handicapped children in Montreal. Wilder Penfield is a more "traditional" elementary school in which three different projects have been evolving: a board-wide French program, a set of lunchtime special interest clubs for pupils, and a "parenting" program for the parents of the community. Courtland Park is the school that perhaps comes closest to the model of the Educational Project, with a tradition of parent and community involvement, a formal Orientation Council, the application of special education techniques to the individualization of learning for all pupils, and a stress on pupil activity; in a way, it is the "activist" school recommended by the Parent Report. The Lennoxville School District is involved in a board-wide project to coordinate the teaching of French as a second language among its nine elementary schools through a program of full-day bilingual kindergartens and an hour-per-day second language program through all six years of the elementary school system. Sir Wilfrid Laurier is a secondary school specializing in cycle one (grades 7 and 8) which is following a definite plan for the development of "core" programs of general education and an approach to school life that is personalized and student-centred. These schools are doing different things, in

different ways, in different contexts. The question is: Do the case studies reveal common patterns among the schools and, if so, do these common patterns suggest any relationship to what may be defined as an Educational Project?

There are, indeed, a number of common elements. First, each school has an identity, a character, an ethos; there is some unifying activity or attitude that brings a coherence to the institution, that characterizes it as different from other schools. In Keith, the integration of a small number of handicapped children into a few classes raises the sensitivity of the whole school community to the handicapped and eliminates boundaries between persons. In Wilder Penfield there is a kind of school-as-service attitude that is expressed both through the clubs for the children and through the parenting program for the adults. In Courtland Park it is an attitude that all education is special education because every child is special, an attitude widely shared in the school community. In the Lennoxville District the unifying principle that binds different schools together is a sense of search, looking for a reasonable and balanced way of helping the English-speaking children of the different communities communicate easily and effectively in French and at the same time preserving a fragile English culture in the region. In Sir Wilfrid Laurier it is a concept of "core", a centering both in the heart of the curriculum and on the person of the early adolescent learner. In each case a project, however limited its origins, spreads to become an identifying characteristic of the school (or in the case

of Lennoxville, a set of schools). In the age of the photocopier, these schools are originals.

A second characteristic is the presence of charismatic leadership. In every instance there are one or two persons -- a special education teacher, a director general, a principal, a vice-principal, two teachers willing to try something, a teacher of the handicapped -- people prepared to take a risk, to follow an idea, to do extra work, to develop new relationships with others. These are the people who develop, articulate, and sustain the projects, and through the projects, the institutions; they provide the leadership that stimulates others to become involved. In all cases, leadership came from professional educators and in most instances the central person was an administrator, seeming to confirm the widely held belief that educational leadership should, and does, come from creative and dynamic administrators.

Third, there is a general focus on a need to be served and a task to be done. Structures, processes, and mechanisms seem to be considered secondary and there is a general preference for using informal and changing arrangements to organize projects and to consult the interested parties. In some cases (Lennoxville, Sir Wilfrid Laurier) there is a written plan or statement of purpose but in other cases this does not seem to be considered necessary. There is a general impression that the success of the various projects rests more on person-to-person contacts than on formal groupings and meetings. Only

in the case of Sir Wilfrid Laurier does there seem to have been a good deal of thought given to the goals of the school as whole; in the other cases, the attention was on a particular need or project and it was as a consequence of commitment to this project that the goals or character of the school may have been altered.

Fourth, in all cases stability and continuity are necessary for the ongoing development of the projects. This is implicit in the reliance on personal leadership and informal structures. In no case does it appear that the change in the character of the school has been "institutionalized" in a way independent of the people and the relationships among them, that a mechanism or structure of continuity has been assured.

Finally, except in the case of the Lennoxville second language project, there is little evidence of systematic evaluation of the activity beyond informal and impressionistic indications of success or, more commonly, the satisfaction of the participants. For the most part these are not seen as "scientific" programs that can, or should, be monitored to determine their effectiveness.

We are looking, then, at activities that (1) touch the identity of the school as a whole, (2) are inspired by charismatic leadership, (3) rely more on informal patterns of interaction than on formal structures, (4) depend on a degree of continuity and stability in the community, and (5) do not use formal mechanisms of evaluation of

effectiveness. Furthermore, these activities are educational in goal and content; they are also professional in the dominant role played by administrators and teachers and the more or less supportive role assumed by parents and other groups.

But are these Educational Projects in capital letters? Do they match the definitions of process and product? Do they meet the criteria? The simple response is: Why not? At best, the participants in these projects were only conscious that they had "A Project" after the fact. To label these projects as Projects is to do little more than to ratify what already exists. Nor do these projects meet all of the criteria that may be suggested; a community is not always clearly identified and various groups, especially parents, are not always actively involved, though they may be generally supportive of the initiative; some projects are centered within the individual school while others are in important ways external to a school or common to a number of schools.

On the other hand, the concept of an Educational Project, as found in various government documents, is itself external to the reality of an individual school, a construct which is created and developed. Its power to provide norms by which individual projects in individual schools are judged better or worse, closer or further away, needs to be examined critically. We must ask to what degree it is necessary or useful to have a set of theoretical criteria by which Projects are to be evaluated. We must also return to the question raised in Chapter

I, the issue of process versus product, the Project as an activity in which to engage or a plan to develop.

It may be less important to think of the Educational Project as a set of criteria by which to measure the quality of local initiatives than as a set of guidelines and suggestions to assist persons and groups concerned with improving the quality of education but who may not have available the kind of leader or the support system from which the schools in the case studies so often benefitted. In this sense, the theory of Educational Projects is not so much concerned with a criterion for judgement than with a catalyst for the kind of "chemistry" that gets people working together for a common goal. It does not matter a great deal if these case studies meet the criteria; what is more important is that they do reflect a philosophy of learning and development, a spirit of involvement, and a sensitivity to the ecology of the school and its community.

To the question "Is the Project a process or a product?" the answer that a student of Zen would give is "Yes." There is no distinction between product and process because the Project must be an organic unity, the whole which is greater than the sum of the parts of products and processes.

IDENTITIES

Whether we think of Educational Projects as helpful guidelines or normative criteria, as products or as processes, the concept of Educational Projects has not yet captured the imagination of the English-language educational community of Quebec. The more common reactions have been lack of knowledge, indifference, and suspicion. It is only recently that materials on the Project have been available in English. Furthermore, the community has been preoccupied with other concerns that were pressing, worrisome, and highly visible: declining enrolments and their implications for closing schools and declaring teachers redundant, a blizzard of pressures, proposals, and programs for improving the quality of the teaching of French in English schools, and a more general anxiety about the health and survival of English-language culture, organizations, and institutions in Quebec. Finally, there was a certain suspicion that the proposal for Educational Projects was essentially a cosmetic operation to mask the true face of government control, centralization, and standardization.

There is, however, a deeper issue here in the relationship between the concept of the Educational Project and the perceptions of the English-language educational community of administrators, teachers, students, and parents. The issue is the distance between a concept that is expressed in philosophical terms and a community that is philosophically casual in its pluralism and pragmatism, a distance

that needs to be surveyed if it is to be bridged. The pluralist character of the English-language community of Quebec -- and it would, perhaps, be more accurate to speak of communities -- is the result of many factors: the mixing of British and American educational ideas, teaching materials, and personnel; the different social and religious traditions of English-Catholic, English-Protestant, and English-Jewish populations; the growing ethnic diversity and consciousness of ethnic identity; the continuous geographic mobility of this community, into Quebec, within Quebec, out of Quebec, and often back to Quebec. This pluralism in the communities is reflected in the schools and a number of important characteristics result from it: a general lack of educational ideology, a tendency to rely on traditional practices, a pragmatic view of the process of education which is increasingly open to various innovations, a reliance on the leadership of key individuals rather than that of key concepts or key structures, a focus on administrators, teachers' associations and, in the Protestant sector, on school boards, more than on individual schools or the provincial government. This pluralism and pragmatism have tended to be mutually reinforcing, pluralist needs being met with pragmatic strategies and this pragmatism leading to more pluralism as individual schools and teachers, in the freedom of the sixties and seventies, developed their own objectives, adapted the programs, selected and often created their teaching materials and used many criteria to evaluate the learning and development of pupils.

Because this community is inclined to the plural and the practical, it

is uncomfortable with the singular and the theoretical. It is more at home with notions of planning, innovations, programs, committees, and educational projects of all sorts and learns from their descriptions; it is not used to a Plan of Action, the reform, the regime pedagogique, encadrement, the Orientation Committee, and the Educational Project and it is not touched by their definitions. It is not so much a matter of translation or tactic of communication, nor is it simply another episode in the ongoing struggle of an "English" group to preserve its independence and privilege. It is both epistemology and politics, a certain disinterest in "the" concept and a certain skepticism about "the" solution, especially if the authors of the concept and the advocates of the solution are in a Ministry of Education whose policies it sometimes finds threatening and in whose activities it finds little expression of its own orientations.

In short, the Educational Project is a concept that is foreign to the English-language educational community. It is a policy which this community has had little hand in shaping and one whose value for the development of high quality English-language education remains, for many, ambiguous. Yet the approach to change, participation, innovation, as well as the overall goal of vital, dynamic schools responding to their environment are all part of the natural life of English-language education and they are ideas with which many educators and parents are quite comfortable. If the structures are less formal, the procedures more ad hoc, and the plans less scrupulously articulated, there is nevertheless a certain affinity

between English-language education and the underlying philosophy of Educational Projects. What is not yet too clear is the potential contribution Educational Projects can make to the future development of education, French and English, in Quebec, a subject worth some further reflection.

ILLUSIONS

In the context of the present reorganization of Quebec education, the Educational Project is an anomaly wrapped in illusions. The major thrust of the Green Paper, the Plan D'Action, the Regime Pedagogique, the new curricula and the proposals for evaluation is in the direction of the scientific and technological management of education. This is the educational philosophy which values standardization of timetables, terminal behavioural objectives, detailed curriculum guidelines, systematic and objective evaluation. It is a worldview based on rationality, coherence, consistency, and systems; it is an orientation not peculiar to Quebec but one which reflects a general trend to go "back to basics", to stress accountability, and to favor competency-based approaches to learning, and it is found throughout North America. It is a thoroughly modern system of education. The Ministry promoting this structure is also promoting the idea that individual schools must reflect the diversity of their own communities, that each school should develop its own character, style, dominant values, and orientation, that all the participants in the

life of a school should share in the creation of this distinctive character, and that mechanisms are being made available, in legislation, to enable schools to pursue this goal. Along with the social science and technology which inspire the Regime pedagogique and the curriculum guidelines, the arts and humanities are to be represented in the Educational Project of each school. It may be an attempt to fuse the two cultures of C.P. Snow but it does look more like an anomaly, something inconsistent, a piece that does not quite fit, a question.

Because it is a question that does not yet have an answer, it invites speculations and, lacking facts, we turn to illusions. One illusion, shared by many not only in the English-speaking community, is that the Project is a smokescreen to cover over the powerful centralizing, technocractic, and statist character of the educational reforms. Those who hold to this illusion may or may not attribute Machiavellian motives to the Ministry but they do believe that the proposals for the creation of Projects are too vague, too feeble and too poorly thought out to serve as a counterbalance to the crisp, systematic, and thoroughly researched government plans for school organization, curriculum, and evaluation.

A second illusion that seems to be cultivated by many of the advocates of the Project is that there is no contradiction between the proposal and other aspects of the educational redirection taking place; the Educational Project with its emphasis on participation and school

initiative is a natural extension of Regulation Number One and the later formation of school committees, and it complements the minimum standards and common guidelines by inviting schools to adapt them to their own style and to go beyond them in order to address local needs.

A third illusion may be suggested, the possibility or, as some would phrase it, the promise that the Educational Project may be taken seriously and that it may lead to a radical reshaping of the pattern of educational decision-making in Quebec. This view is based on the belief that the motives behind the original proposal are irrelevant. It suggests that the popularization, creation, and development of Educational Projects, far from being complementary to existing structures and proposed regimes, would challenge these structures and lead to a new definition of the role of the school, and a new pattern of relationships with school boards and government.

If the parents, administrators, teachers, students, non-teaching personnel, and other interested groups in a community begin to come together, in some form or other, to develop an Educational Project and create a school "with character," they will begin to think of the school as "their" school. Already we see this happening in many places where various committees, sometimes parents, sometimes teachers, sometimes administrators, achieve consensus on such issues as the religious or moral character of the school, the kind of conduct that is to be promoted among pupils (and teachers), the way in which learning is to be approached and organized, the development of a

curriculum focus, or the particular interrelationship which should exist between the school and the community. Private schools and so-called alternative schools in the public sector are fairly clear examples of this process of developing school character but many other elementary schools and often units within secondary schools are heading in the same direction. The case studies, which have been presented, show both variety of content and approach and similarity of general orientation.

But these trends, far from being complementary to existing policies and structures, present a challenge to them. Schools which have distinctive identities rooted in a community also have distinctive needs; they may not need greater financial resources than the system normally allocates, but they do need acknowledgement, integrity, continuity, and self-direction. Although there are enabling and facilitating mechanisms available, educational projects are still fragile because they do not fit. Schools with Educational Projects cannot "belong" to school boards in the way we now think of schools as units of boards and school policies as extensions of board policies. Schools with Projects are certainly going to be more difficult to close by board administrators using board criteria. School with Projects will soon cease to accept the assignment of administrators (especially principals) and teachers into and out of the school by school board decisions for board purposes or collective agreement clauses. Schools with Orientation Councils are soon going to insist on a veto or at least a strong influence on the appointment of new

teachers, wanting to make sure these teachers are congruent with the "orientation." Schools with Projects will want more control over the school budget and spending priorities. Schools with Projects will be adopting curriculum innovations and learning designs that may not fit too well with board regulations or government guidelines. Schools with Projects will in many places begin to attract pupils away from other schools without Projects or with Projects that parents find uncongenial. Finally, schools with Projects will start developing networks to include other schools, within the same board or in other boards, that share the same goals and interests.

The illusion in all this is that the different ideas of Educational Projects and the different approaches to them will be successfully promoted in the educational systems, that schools will be encouraged and aided to develop their own Projects, and that enough of these Projects will be vigorous and healthy and develop their own dynamic. If this is an illusion, then the reality will be a very centralized, unitary, and increasingly brittle school system and an exciting opportunity will have been lost for Quebec.

On the other hand, every project implies a projection and if dozens or even hundreds of successful Educational Projects are developed, what effects will this have on the educational system? First, schools become more autonomous and there is greater diversity in goal and style among schools. Second, schools with good Projects become recognized for their quality and become successful in their ability to

attract students. Third, successful schools are preoccupied with preserving their continuity and acquire the final say over the key area of selection and preservation of personnel. Fourth, in systems with declining enrolments, new tenure policies have to be negotiated and new policies for the assignment of staff worked out. Fifth, school closings and redundant teachers become more and more a matter of supply and demand, consequences of the "market value" of their Educational Projects. Sixth, the importance of school boards declines, if they continue to exist at all, as they become coordinators of services to schools. Seventh, private schools become progressively incorporated into the public system, each with its own Educational Project. Eighth, some system of "vouchers" is introduced as a means of ensuring access to a wide range of choice in schools and an overall system of "client protection" is developed, probably by the government. Ninth, linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity is accomodated both by Projects that have a particular focus (trilingual Jewish elementary schools) and by those that have different options within the same school (multiconfessional humanistic programs).

It is a dangerous illusion to believe that this would be accomplished without strain and without transformations taking place in what we call the education system. Creative thinking is required to determine the kinds of decisions that are properly the responsibility of public bodies such as governments and parents' committees and those that are the responsibility of professional bodies of educators. There should

be public debate on the range of tolerance for educational diversity: What must be taught in all schools regardless of the Educational Project and what kinds of learning, and Projects, if any, should be forbidden? We have to find new ways of allocating resources, money and people, among schools and also find ways to preserve certain learning, teaching, and curriculum models which are important, even precious, but which may be temporarily out of fashion. This is an obligation of a democratic Ministry of Education.

Among the models of learning, teaching, and curriculum which "are important, even precious, but which may be temporarily out of fashion" is English-language education. If the Educational Project, as philosophical and singular concept, has not yet appealed to the pragmatism and pluralism of the English-language educational community, it may nevertheless be a pragmatic method of preserving and enriching the diversity of the education of the Catholic, Protestant, Jew and non-believer; of the Anglo-Saxon, Greek, Irish, Scot and Italian; of the child in Beaconsfield and in Blanc Sablon, through a network of English-language Educational Projects.

And in the coming age of information overload, megastructures, pocket calculators, videotex, global problematiques, general systems theory, and biotechnologies, it may be that the idea of a school, serving a community, with many participants pursuing a sense of identity and belonging through an Educational Project may be what Ivan Illich would call a "Convivial Tool" for all Quebecers.

In project-ing this possibility -- and this promise -- the experiences of Keith, Wilder Penfield, Courtland Park, the schools of Lennoxville and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and the reflections of Gary Anderson and Janyne Rahming, may be points from which to "project."